

Free Will And The Stoics

Post by "Cassius" of June 26, 2019 at 8:22 AM

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From my reading of Epictetus, he viewed us as having LIMITED Freewill.

The best example from his reading is from Discourses II. The example is going on a trip. one can select the captain, ship, crew, destination and date of departure. Beyond that, there is much outside of our control. For example, we could becalmed. Or we could encounter a ferocious storm and our ship founder. None of those are in our control. Chance enters at some point, no matter how hard we try, wish or demand. And there is nothing we can do to change the random character of the universe.

Since our control is limited, we are kind of like the dog on the leash. Do we control if there is war and hunger? Do we control drought and famine? To a certain degree, we as individuals can impact those things, but if the general tide is against us, we control little.

Rand believed we could change the world with our will. Perhaps if enough agreed with the goal we could influence all events. Certainly we see individuals in history who have made great changes by force of will. Those individuals are extremely rare and not the norm.

In short, I think we have limited, not absolute, Freewill.