

What is Virtue and what aspects of Virtue does an Epicurean cultivate?

Post by "Kalosyni" of August 19, 2025 at 10:04 AM

[Quote from Matteng](#)

Thanks, I often worry

that the topic sometimes fades into the background because rivals to Epicurean philosophy often define virtue as the highest good instead of Pleasure.

One must be careful not to create a false dichotomy like virtue vs. pleasure. In Epicureanism, virtue and pleasure grow together, but virtue gets its value from pleasure, not the other way around. Virtue is the greatest but instrumental good. Therefore, many people (as I used to) unconsciously believe that Stoics, for example, are generally more virtuous than Epicureans, which is nonsense. The path to pleasure/eudaimonia always leads via virtue. I see the biggest difference (virtue or pleasure as the core of eudaimonia/life goal) in that eudaimonia, the good self or inner spirit, is defined by the Stoics as "doing good" while Epicureans define it as "experiencing good."

Very well said [Matteng](#)

This section of the Letter to Menoeceus points toward choosing actions which are non-harming:

"He therefore thinks it better to be unfortunate in reasonable action than to prosper in unreason. For it is better in a man's actions that what is well chosen (should fail, rather than that what is ill chosen) should be successful owing to chance."

Choosing actions which do not harm others will often (but not every single time) create the best outcome.