

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

Post by "Cassius" of August 26, 2025 at 1:55 PM

## [Quote from DaveT](#)

I am enjoying this discussion. I recently read that a distinction between the Stoics and the Epicureans was that the Stoics focused on a public, civic-minded orientation, and thus a belief in virtue as a goal to that end. And that the Epicureans' belief in more private life promoted pleasure etc. and friendship for personal happiness. I know this may sound simplistic, but that comparison helps me understand why the two philosophies were so different in the view and uses of virtue.

I think that's definitely true - that they had a different orientation toward public life. That seems like an innocuous enough distinction, but then you get to the question of "why" they had a such a different attitude. And I'd say that stems directly from the physics as to the nature of the universe. If you think there's a "Providence" that has designed the universe and everything in it intelligently, then you're going to want to work to bring not only yourself but also your society into conformity with those views.

If you think that there is no central intelligent designer, and that nature works through practical experience in many different ways according to circumstances, then you're going to be much more willing to "live and let live" and let each person pursue their own personal view of what makes them happy.