

"Faith" And Confidence In Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of August 27, 2025 at 7:36 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

If empirical evidence is certain, one has no need of "faith" – one has certain knowledge. If the available empirical evidence is subject to revision via new observations, as it generally is (whether one acknowledges it or not), then it is not certain. Faith cannot make it so. But we can act on the best evidence we have.

Yes, we act on the best evidence we have. But I don't think the first sentence is obvious. No amount of empirical evidence is sufficient for certainty unless you have a working definition of certainty, and that's what the issue of trust / faith is all about -- or so I think at the moment.

I seem to remember that you Pacatus consider yourself to be either eclectic or skeptic or some combination rather than orthodox Epicurean, so I think we're getting here at some of the reason for that and lurkers reading this should be aware of that.

Epicurus appears to have had a working version of dogmatism in which he did consider certain things to be certain and beyond the expectation of need for revision. And of course that's highly controversial, and in the past and likely in the future will be a dividing line between those who consider themselves to be orthodox Epicurean vs those who don't. Of course calling yourself an orthodox Epicurean and a dollar might buy you a cup of coffee nowadays.