

A. Le Grand's Divine Epicurus

Post by "Cassius" of June 5, 2026 at 6:27 AM

I would suggest that a representative sample of the Christianization of this work is the "Third Discourse" on Celibacy starting on page 45 of the PDF. Yes indeed this represents a species of modern Epicureanism, but i can't imagine Epicurus taking considering what this chapter contains to be generally wise advice. It gets worse after the passage I quoted above.

Here' are more examples:

Quote

Marriage is the partage of those who are either Incontinent or Slaves, and that person must needs lose his Liberty, or his Reason, who will ingage himself to it, without an unavoidable Necessity.

Quote

But the reasons that are brought to forbid a second Marriage, are but little better then insignificant and Non-sence, to give Epicurus satisfaction; This Philosopher condemns it in all his Writings and though he believes it may be permitted, yet he neither judges it honest or reasonable. He can never persuade himself that a Woman had any Affections for her former Husband, who ingages her self to another, and he accounts her Infamous every time that she proves unfaithful to him. He instances to us in heathenish Women, who have preferr'd Death to the bonds of Marriage, and chosen rather to burn in the Fire, then to lose their Liberty a second time. 'Tis to be ignorant of the miseries of her first condition, to aspire at the same again, and to be insensible she has ever been unhappy to entertain the Addresses of her new Votaries after she has once been released from the grievances of Marriage. But peradventure her first Affections have been very Fortunate, and she found in the person of her Husband rather an Amorous Gallant then a Domineering Master: Who then can assure her that he who shall succeed him, will have the same passion for her? Since that which ought to feed it, will be dying dayly, her Charms will diminish, her Beauty languish, and all the Pains she can possibly be at to conserve it, have not power enough to keep her from growing Old. A Husband looks not upon another's leavings but with Disgust, and he without any Regret can see

that Face decay, of which he has not cropt the Flower. If her Marriage has been Unfortunate, dares she venture her Person a second time, and run the risque of being miserable all the days of her life? Surely she must have lost her Sences that is in love with Slavery, and purchase the pleasure of a Beast at the expence of her Liberty.

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Quote

How happy then is the Caelibate Life, if compared to Marriage, and how redevable are those persons to the goodness of Heaven, who are exempt from those Frailties which ingage even the greatest part of Mankind to it! For if Virginitie be a Grace, Continnence is a Vertue, it is an aspiring to that Sanctity that prefers the Spirit to the Flesh, and to contemn the Inhabitants of the Earth, to pursue the intelligences which the Heav'ns are imploy'd in.

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Here's a real gem:

Quote

Envy has its beginning from the Eyes, and could never torment the base and unworthy, but that the Sight furnishes them with occasions for their torture. In short, most Sins would not have the vogue and sufferage of Mankind, were they but blind; and they would be obliged to acknowledg the mercifulness of Nature, for having deprived them of a good which is the beginning of all their evils.

It cannot but be a great satisfaction to be deliv'ed from those things that are prejudicial to us, to be disingaged from any farther concern with those guides that have betray'd us, and to have the loss of those lights that have led us into places of darkness. Vertue has no need of light to produce its self, and if we will believe the Poets who have described them, even the most excellent among them all are blind. Faith sees not but by the Ears, Hope has no other Organs but the Hands. Love knows nothing but by the means of the Heart; and if Justice its self had eyes, they ought to be hard bound down with a fillet, to oblige its Lovers to despise the things of the Earth, and to exalt their thoughts to those of

Heaven. If Nature has deny'd us the use of Sight, it is to make us of the household of God, to rank us in the number of the Vertuous, and to make us partakers of the glory of happy Souls.

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