

Discussion of the Society of Epicurus' 20 Tenets of 12/21/19

Post by "Cassius" of January 10, 2020 at 8:51 AM

[Quote from Mike Anyayahan](#)

But is it possible for atheists to be called Epicureans as well?

You asked Elli that question, but I want to give my answer too.

Of course it is "possible" for atheists to be called Epicureans. The question that has to be asked is "Is it proper to call them Epicureans?" And "In what context is it proper or improper to call them Epicureans."

If you are working on reconstructing a philosophy and creating a community of like-minded people to work together happily on that common project, it's necessary to come to some kind of understanding of where the limits are, how bright the line is, etc.

That's really all I am talking about here. "Epicurean" is a concept - a word - just like any other. It has only the meaning we give to it, based on all the circumstances that play into the discussion. There is no "ideal Epicurean" living in Plato's world of forms, or breathed out of the mouth of a god, or existing as an Aristotelian "essence" inside of us, waiting to be uncovered. "The earth belongs to the living," in Jefferson's phrasing. There are only living breathing humans doing their best to communicate with each other in a precise enough way that we can have a meeting of the minds. Unless we take the time to define our words and sharpen our understanding of the issues, there can really never be a true meeting, or have that meeting exist happily for very long.