

On the associations between Virtue and Pleasure and my Epicurean Write up

Post by “Eoghan Gardiner” of March 27, 2018 at 4:43 AM

Hello all, just came here from the FB group, was going to write this over there but we seem to moving to this forum so I'll write it here.

I wanted to discuss why Epicureans (and most Hedonists such as John Stuart Mill) regard Virtue so highly in their hedonistic philosophy. A virtue, is a character trait that is seem as positive, how do we know it's positive? Well we Epicureans know that it's a positive character trait because they lead to pleasure, when you are generous it feels good, when you are prudent with your choices you avoid a pain or gain a please. How do Stoics know why Virtue is good? I dunno, Zeus I guess.

Pleasure is our highest goal, specifically a pleasurable life. Epicureans aren't too worried about having one massive pleasure once a month then living 29 days of pain, they are concerned with pleasurable living, a life style. So because of this goal, pleasure and pain are tools on what to avoid and what to accept e.g. eating feels good when hungry and it removes a pain but eating too much can cause problems, so eat in moderation for a pleasurable life (virtue of Prudence, again we know this is good because it leads to a pleasurable life).

What other virtues are good for an Epicurean and why, well Justice. Not because of some divine law which is handed down to us from God or Zeus but rather because it allows everyone to pursue a pleasurable life without harming one another. We abide by the laws of the country because people who harm others get punished and therefore are deterred from interfering with others happiness. Endurance is also a good because sometimes we must accept a pain for a later pleasure.

Are some pleasures higher or lower than others in Epicureanism? Well, friendship is seen as the highest way to live pleurably so it seems that there is some ranking system for pleasures.

Overall that is where my Epicurean philosophy is at right now, and my understanding of Virtue. Looking forward to chatting with you all on this forum.