

"Living Life Full Measure" as an Epicurean Metaphor

Post by "Cassius" of May 14, 2023 at 1:40 PM



In case some are not familiar with it, I would submit for your consideration (a Rod Serling phrase there) one of the most well-thought-of episodes of the 60's Twilight Zone episodes --- "A Stop At Willoughby."

Here is its Wikipedia entry:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Stop_at_Willoughby

And here's a link where it currently can be viewed: <https://odysee.com/@Ntv:3/Twiligh...At-Willoughby:0>

The reason it comes to mind is that the thrust of the episode is that the lead character envisions his own version of a "paradise" situation in which: "He learns that this would be a place that is "peaceful, restful, where a man can slow down to a walk and live his life full measure."

This definitely involves slowing down and getting off the rat race of a modern competitive and commercial life, but for purposes of the current analysis I would focus on the fact that his "paradise" vision does not involve being a corpse or asleep, but living a "normal" life full of "normal" activities (band concerts, fishing, etc). This is in contrast to his boss who tells him to "push, push, push" and his wife who drinks herself to death while worrying about her peers and the country club.

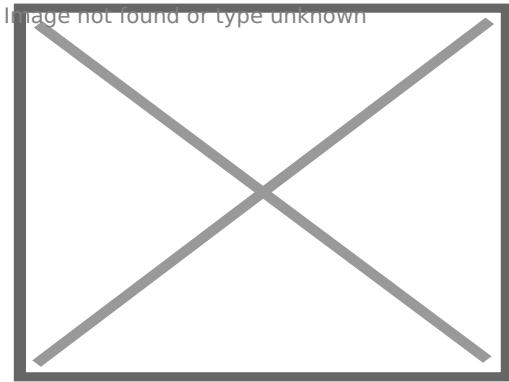
As usual with Twilight Zone the issue is more submitted for consideration rather than suggesting a practical response (not to spoil the plot, but the lead character ends up dead). However the imagery of how the best life involves action, rather than being simply a floating disembodied mind, is useful for our purposes, I think.

A full measure life would include all the things that Epicurus said he experienced and without which he would not have known the good:

"I know not how to conceive the good, apart from the pleasures of taste, of sex, of sound, and the pleasures of beautiful form."

- Diogenes Laertius, Book X

If you haven't seen this one it is 30 minutes well spent.



[A Stop at Willoughby](#)

"A Stop of Willoughby" is the thirtieth episode of the The Twilight Zone. "This is Gart Williams, age thirty-eight, a man protected by a suit of armor, all...

twilightzone.fandom.com

Push! Push! Push! The lead character's boss reminds me of Zeno pointing an accusing finger at Epicurus on the side of the Bosoreale cup:



Post by “Godfrey” of May 14, 2023 at 7:32 PM

Not to repeat myself, but this also relates to my comment elsewhere:

Post

[RE: PD01 - Gratitude and Weakness \(Especially In Relation to the Gods\)](#)

This brings to mind pleasure ethics v duty ethics: if you consider it to be your duty to do a particular thing then you're likely to pursue it regardless of the pain involved. Compare this to pleasure ethics, where minimizing pain is a concern: you may achieve the same thing, but often much more pleasurably for all involved. Or you may choose to flee from the particular thing if you judge it to be a corrosive desire.



Godfrey

May 14, 2023 at 7:27 PM

Post by “Pacatus” of May 15, 2023 at 2:14 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

(not to spoil the plot, but the lead character ends up dead)



Post by “Pacatus” of May 15, 2023 at 2:28 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

However the imagery of how the best life involves action, rather than being simply a floating disembodied mind, is useful for our purposes, I think.

I will add, though, that "living full measure" also includes (for me at least) a lively imagination (to which memory is also related): "At its most basic, every memory recall is imagination,

because memories are reconstructed every time they are retrieved." [Davies, Jim. Imagination: The Science of Your Mind's Greatest Power (p. 19). Pegasus Books. Kindle Edition.]