

Gassendi On Happiness

Post by "Cassius" of November 9, 2025 at 2:34 PM

Note: This will be the thread to post about Gassendi's commentary on Epicurus from the "Happiness" section of his [1699 Three Discourses On Happiness - Virtue -Liberty](#).

Almost offhandedly [Robert](#) wins the award for the day, probably the week, and possibly for the month for bringing something we've not discussed before to our attention. I highly recommend his link on [Gassendi on Happiness](#). I suspect we're not going to agree with everything that Gassendi has to say but this is VERY interesting. Thanks Robert!

You'll probably want to start reading from page one, but i'm clipping the following just to show how it's directly on point with our discussions.



Post by "Cassius" of November 9, 2025 at 2:44 PM

The opening section right at the beginning about how to judge the man who is roasted in the bull of Phalaris as still happy is an excellent extrapolation of Epicurus and right on point with our discussion in the Zoom today!

Possibly the best explanation of Happiness as I personally think Epicurus would define it that i have seen.

Post by "Cassius" of November 9, 2025 at 2:54 PM

As should be expected, the usefulness of this is limited almost immediately into the discussion by Gassendi's insistence that there is both a Providential god whom we should worship and an eternal soul that survives death.

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 3:02 PM

I see on page 10 that Gassendi holds that Epicurus did *not* hasten his own death / commit suicide. Note that Gassendi is denouncing the Stoics for allowing suicide, and he is praising the religious view that only God should determine the end of our lives.

Gassendi quotes Lactantius saying that Cleanthes, Chrysippus, and Zeno killed themselves "in hopes of being instantly transported to heaven."

looks to me like he is referring to Stoicism when he says "this is a cursed and abominable doctrine which drives men out of their lives."

Post by “Patrikios” of November 9, 2025 at 3:21 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I suspect we're not going to agree with everything that Gassendi has to say but this is VERY interesting. Thanks Robert!

[Robert](#)

Thanks for this paper from Gassendi. Even Karl Marx held contrary views on Gassendi as an 'Epicurean' ☐☐

Quote

*The experts know that no preliminary studies that are even of the slightest use exist for the subject of this treatise. What Cicero and Plutarch have babbled has been babbled after them up to the present day. **Gassendi**, who freed Epicurus from the interdict*

which the Fathers of the Church and the whole Middle Ages, the period of realised unreason, had placed upon him, presents in his expositions [15] only one interesting element. He **seeks to accommodate his Catholic conscience to his pagan knowledge and Epicurus to the Church, which certainly was wasted effort.** It is as though one wanted to throw the habit of a Christian nun over the bright and flourishing body of the Greek Lais. It is rather that Gassendi learns philosophy from Epicurus than that he could teach us about Epicurus' philosophy.

Karl Marx, doctoral dissertation - *The Difference Between the Democreatin and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature* - Robert C. Tucker translation as rendered by [Eikadistes](#) here: <https://twentiers.com/marx/>

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 3:31 PM

Thanks Patrikios!

Further, I am not clear whether this document is a translation, a paraphrase, or some combination of the two.

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 3:35 PM

OMG -- On page 21 it seems that Gassendi is denying that Epicurus made the statement that Epicurus would not know the good but for the pleasures of taste, etc. And this PDF glosses over the entire argument with an aside which does not include the key material!

Reading through this section that deprecates active pleasures and seems to elevate an overly high estimation of Seneca makes me want to agree even more firmly with Karl Marx that Gassendi does not have all of his Epicurean philosophy correct.

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 3:51 PM

I am still reading it fast and furiously but this document clearly merits Gassendi's reputation as a defender and transmitter of Epicurus. But I have lots of questions including:

UPDATE: Some answers here <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/faqs/how>

1. When was it written?
2. To whom was it published?
3. When was it first translated into English?
4. Is this what Jefferson and others had access to which acquainted them with Epicurean arguments?
5. Lots and lots of questions in my mind about this document, not the least of which is:
6. Why hasn't this document been one of the centerpieces of discussion of Epicurean philosophy for the last 100 years?
7. Did DeWitt have this? Is this something that the well-known commentaries about Epicurus over the last 50 years have incorporated?
8. Who is Jonathan Bennett? Where has this appeared other than this website?
 1. I note: Copyright ©2010–2015 All rights reserved. Jonathan Bennett [Brackets] enclose editorial explanations. Small ·dots· enclose material that has been added, but can be read as though it were part of the original text. Occasional •bullets, and also indenting of passages that are not quotations, are meant as aids to grasping the structure of a sentence or a thought. Every four-point ellipsis indicates the omission of a brief passage that seems to present more difficulty than it is worth. Longer omissions are reported between brackets in normal-sized type. —This version is based on the French translation of the work by Gassendi's friend François Bernier. When a passage by an ancient author is reported or quoted in French, Bernier usually gives it in Latin also; his French versions are pretty accurate, so the Latin will be passed over silently except where there is a reason to call attention to it. —For the other work by Gassendi presented on this website, see the final set of Objections to Descartes's Meditations. First launched: March 2021

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 4:16 PM

I doubt we've mentioned Maximus of Tyre at all here on this forum, or if we have we certainly haven't mentioned him much, and yet he bursts out of this article as having some of the best takes since Epicurus himself!

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 4:20 PM

Gassendi even explains and defends Torquatus for defending his ancestor's execution of his son for violating the rules of battle --- this article is amazingly comprehensive.

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 4:28 PM

[Joshua](#) is going to really enjoy all this detailed analysis of the story of Marcus Regulus around page 47.

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 4:52 PM

[Bryan](#) you are among the most well-read of us here. Are you familiar with this work?

Post by “Cassius” of November 9, 2025 at 5:08 PM

OK I finished it. The article tails off into an overly-long praise of frugality and simple living, even managing to finish with some praise of walking around naked and shoeless, but the lack of a rousing ending does not diminish what a generally interesting and helpful article this is.

I'd like to know what Karl Marx's criticism was to see how it comports with mine, but as I see it on first reading the defects are pretty limited but clear:

- 1- Gassendi won't abandon or examine the implications of the absence of a supernatural god.
- 2 - Ditto as to there not being an immortal soul.
- 3 - He doesn't seem to appreciate fully that the mental pleasures of rest that he praises are in addition to, and not solely for the sake of, his pleasures of rest. But he actually does catch himself and goes on relatively at length to insist that Epicurean pleasures do not entail inaction, so he's not as bad on that score as some.

In general, my summary would be that this is an essential article for anyone who wants to understand Epicurus and how we got to where we are today in appraising him.

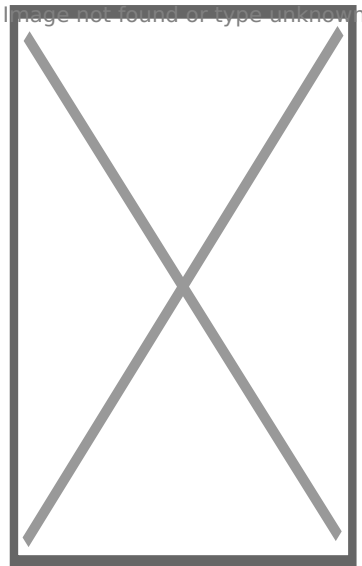
There are lots and lots of anecdotal quotes that I've never seen referenced before.

Post by “Cassius” of November 10, 2025 at 6:58 PM

I haven't had time to pursue this further but my current thought is that much of the usefulness of this presentation is going to turn on the extent to which we can verify that this modernization is consistent with the original text. On first look I haven't seen a link to an original Latin or French version of this text, so if someone finds something over time please be sure to post here.

Post by “TauPhi” of November 10, 2025 at 9:46 PM

Proper English translation from 1699 containing 'Happiness':



[Three discourses of happiness, virtue and liberty. 1699 : Gassendi, Pierre. : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

Three discourses of happiness, virtue and liberty. 1699..Digitized from IA40313015-80.Previous issue:...

archive.org

Transcription of the book (not perfect but workable - click 'View entire text' to see the whole book):

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A42442.0001.001/?view=toc>

Post by “Cassius” of November 11, 2025 at 3:45 AM

Thank you Tau Phi this will be extremely helpful!

As a test I decided to look for the original version of whatever was used to generate this part, which occurs on page 21 right before the beginning of the section entitled "How Epicurus and Aristippus Differ"

There is only one passage that seems to be able to create difficulty. [It is a passage that Cicero claims to quote from a book by Epicurus; and Gassendi piles up evidence that it was not written by Epicurus, and was probably inserted into Cicero's personal copy of the book by malicious Stoics.]

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Checking the digital copy of the English translation it appears to me that looking for this would take us to this page, to which I would then scroll to the bottom:

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A42442.0001.001/1:4.1.2?rgn=div3;view=fulltext>

But I can't find anything parallel there.

In contrast, the paraphrasing of the start of the next section "How Epicurus and Aristippus Differ" does track nicely with the original, which is here:

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A42442.0001.001/1:4.2.1?rgn=div3;view=fulltext>

I'm not sure why that method of finding the link doesn't track, but here's one that does seem to match:

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A42442.0001.001/1:4.2?rgn=div2;view=fulltext>

Quote

Which can be word searched to find:

There is but one passage more that may seem to create some difficulty. It is that which Cicero objects, as being taken out of the Book wherein Epicurus's Ends and Designs are described; for he makes him say, That if we take away Bodily and Sensual Pleasures, he knows no other good. But why may we not easily suppose that the Stoicks, who have been so bold to forge whole Books, and make Epicurus their Author, have maliciously put this Passage in his Book, and it being thus abused and falsified, it is come into the hands of Cicero, and Atheneus? That which makes us suspect this is, First, That Laertius, who hath left us a Catalogue of Epicurus's Books, and consequently ought to know what was in them, when he relates a passage out of his Book of The End, and others of the same, saith, That they are Fools that impose such things upon Epicurus,

for they are not to be found in the true Copies. And Hesichius assures us that they are gross Lyars, that assert any such thing of him. Secondly, Epicurus himself complains of their making him speak those words which were against his Judgment, and his Disciples would never acknowledge that passage; but they have rather always complain'd of it, and exclaim'd against it. Thirdly, These words are expressly contrary to those, which are known to be of Epicurus, *Res Venereae nunquam prosunt, & multum est ni noceant*, as we have already observ'd. Fourthly, That Cicero amongst these Objections that he makes, cannot but propose this Question, as if Truth himself had forced him to it; What, do you believe that Epicurus was of this Perswasion, and that his Opinions were dishonest, sensual, and lewd? For my part I can't believe it; for I find, that he declares a great many excellent things, and very vertuous. Fifthly, That Cicero acknowledges, as he was a very Popular Man, that he did not tie up himself to speak according to the strict Opinions of the Philosophers, but agreeable with the Notions of the People. *Verum ego non quaero nunc quae sit Philosophia verissima, sed quae Oratori conjuncta maxime*: Not to say that he could not bar himself from speaking well of Epicurus, as being a Man without Malice, or rather a right honest Man. *Venit Epicurus Vir minime malus, vel potius Vir optimus*. And when he speaks of the Epicureans, he saith, that they are very good Men, that he hath never met with a sort of Persons less malicious; that the Epicureans complain of his endeavouring to speak ill of Epicurus; that whole Crowds of Epicureans came frequently to visit him, but that nevertheless he doth not despise them. *Quos tamen non asperror*; These are his own words. description PAGE 58 Wherein Epicurus, and Aristippus differ. NOW that we may see exactly in what Epicurus differs from Aristippus, we ne

So the paraphrase is definitely accurate and Gassendi does allege that this statement is not true to Epicurus.

I don't find Gassendi's reasoning to be persuasive nor do I recall other scholars following him on it.

So this little exercise indicates well of the paraphrase but also indicates the hazards of following Gassendi too closely.

Post by “TauPhi” of November 11, 2025 at 6:58 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

So this little exercise indicates well of the paraphrase but also indicates the hazards of following Gassendi too closely.

Pierre Gassendi lived and worked in the 17th century. This is historically very important period for the revival of Epicureanism as the philosophy started to get some traction again but at that time everything got filtered through Christianity. Gassendi, Le Grand and Charleton are Epicurean heroes in disguise. They tried to put Epicurus back on the map but the map was still firmly stomped by a Christian boot. Their works are really interesting and they should be investigated closely even if they can't be treated as authoritative sources for the study of Epicureanism. I'll make separate post about Le Grand in few days as I'm currently restoring one of his works.

Post by “Cassius” of November 11, 2025 at 7:49 AM

The PDF at Archive.org that you've found Tau Phi contains the full book and therefore considerable commentary on Epicurus under both the topics of Virtue and Liberty (Virtue i know because I've now glanced at most of it; Liberty I am presuming.).

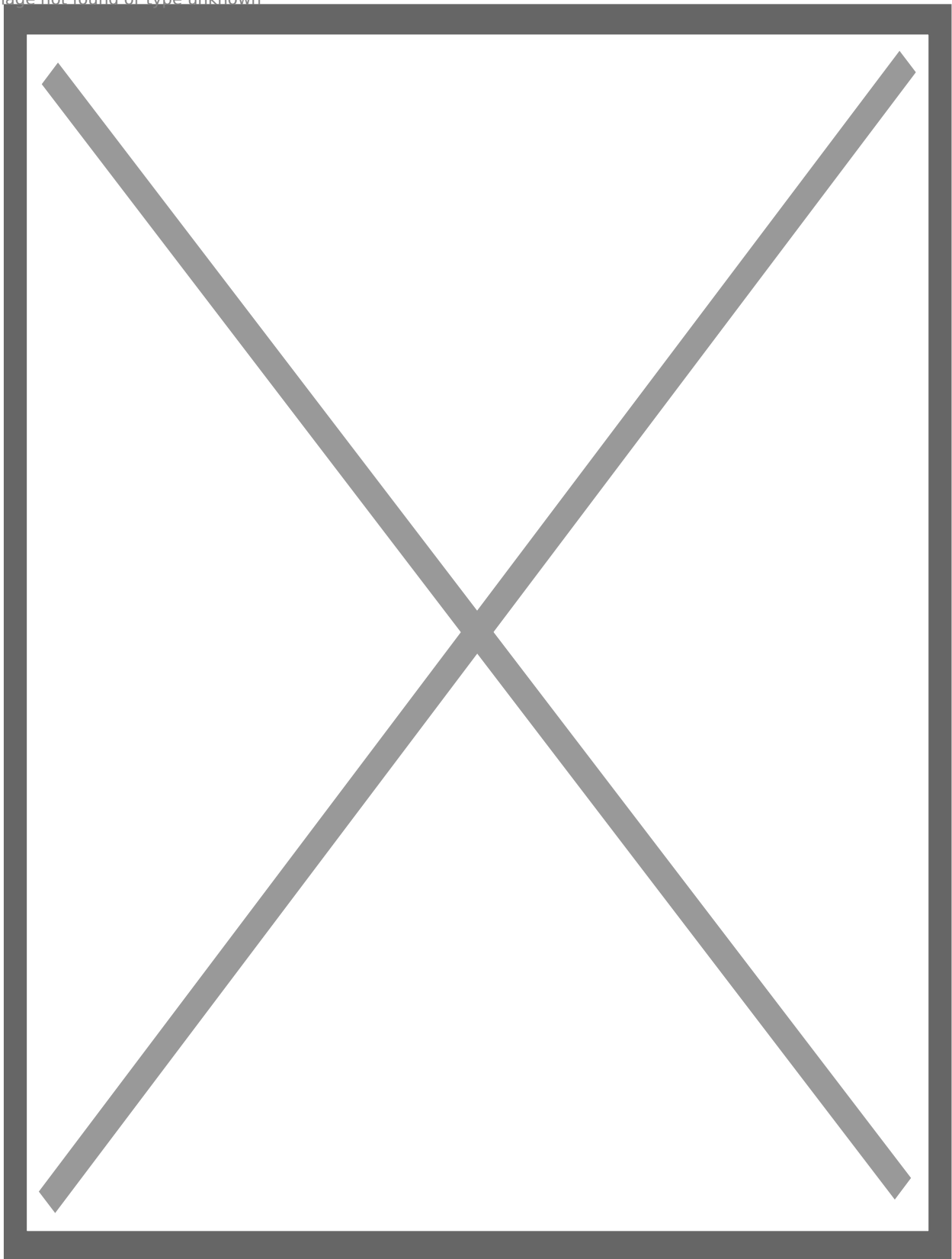
This is going to open up considerably more access than we've had before. The Bernier edition is MUCH easier to read than the Thomas Stanley version of Gassendi's life of Epicurus.

I'll rearrange the forum on Gassendi and set up separate locations to discuss those other two topics, because there is a lot of material I doubt most of us have seen before.

Post by “Cassius” of November 11, 2025 at 9:40 AM

So Francois Bernier is the person to whom we owe so much here for access to this material:

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Bernier abridged and translated the philosophical writings of his friend [Pierre Gassendi](#) from Latin into French. Initial editions of Bernier's *Abregé de la Philosophie de Gassendi* were published in Paris in 1674 by the family Langlois and in 1675 by Estienne Michallet. A complete edition in eight volumes was published by Anisson and Posuel at [Lyon](#) in 1678; Anisson and Posuel joined with Rigaud to publish a second edition in seven volumes in 1684. Bernier objectively and faithfully rendered Gassendi's ideas in his *Abregé*, without editorial interjection or invention. However, Bernier remained uncomfortable with some of Gassendi's notions: in 1682, Estienne Michallet was again his publisher, putting forth his *Doutes de Mr. Bernier sur quelques-uns des principaux Chapitres de son Abregé de la Philosophie de Gassendi*.

Post by “Patrikios” of November 11, 2025 at 12:46 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

In general, my summary would be that this is an essential article for anyone who wants to understand Epicurus and how we got to where we are today in appraising him.

[Cassius](#) Thanks for that analysis as you read through those 70 pages on **#Happiness**. I liked how Gassendi gives some added perspective on dealing with pain.

Quote

*For there are things like fire and torments that he would wish not to suffer from, things he would much rather not have come his way. But when they arrive, he considers them as inevitable evils, and he **endures them steadily**; so that he can say 'I burn, it is true, and I suffer, I sigh sometimes and let my tears flow, but I do not succumb. I am not vanquished and **I do not let myself enter into a cowardly despair that would render my condition even more miserable.**'*

This describes how we should prepare mentally for difficulties ***before*** they arrive. Gassendi describes how the courageous person thinks through pain in advance: "*great pains usually end quickly, slight pains have breaks, and moderate pains are within our control.*" This mental

preparation itself brings pleasure—"the deep satisfaction of knowing circumstances won't conquer you."

This appears to be an application of VS47, to anticipate future pains - both physical and mental pains.

"**VS47.** *I have anticipated thee, Fortune, and I have closed off every one of your devious entrances.* "

Post by "Robert" of November 11, 2025 at 8:04 PM

[Cassius](#), thank you for starting this thread, and glad folks are finding the essay of interest! I became intrigued by Gassendi for reasons that have been touched on in the thread--i.e., he's a crucial link to the modern era. I was specifically interested in his take on "liberty" and how this links up with the modern understanding of the term. And then I noticed that "Happiness" had relevance to some of the things we have been discussing in the forum and our Sunday sessions.

Certainly some problem areas, as both you and [Patrikios](#) (and Karl Marx) have pointed out. So I'm also quite interested in the divergences, some of which you have identified already. Regarding Gassendi's dismissal of active pleasures, I see that he is going to great lengths to distinguish Epicurus from Aristippus, and maybe this leads him to overcompensate by implying that Epicureans were sort of proto-monastics.

I've only started exploring his work and don't have a good read yet on the availability of translation. I started with the 1699 text, then had a look at the PDF I shared and decided that it was reliable. It's certainly easier to read! But I'll continue poking around.

[Patrikios](#), you've really got me interested now in Marx's take on Epicurus. The fact that Epicurus influenced thinkers as divergent as Jefferson and Marx blows my mind.

Post by "Eikadistes" of November 12, 2025 at 10:05 AM

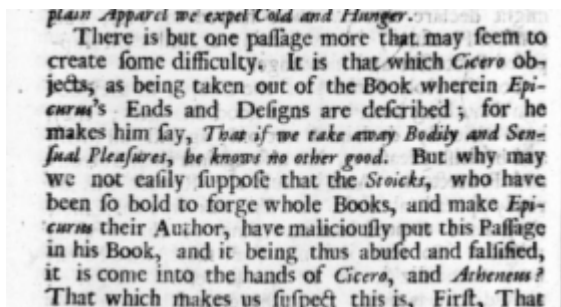
[Quote from Robert](#)

The fact that Epicurus influenced thinkers as divergent as Jefferson and Marx blows my mind.

No doubt! Once I saw a few Lucretian callbacks in Shakespeare, I began compiling a list of other writers who make explicit or indirect mention of either Epicurean Philosophy or *De Rerum Natura* (usually the latter, having been received from Latin): [Bacon](#), [Bergson](#), [Byron](#), [Chaucer](#), [de Bergerac](#), [Darwin](#), [Deleuze](#), [Descartes](#), [Diderot](#), [d'Holbach](#), [Dryden](#), [Einstein](#), [Erasmus](#), [Frederick II](#), [Freud](#), [Gassendi](#), [Goethe](#), [Halley](#), [Hitchens](#), [Hobbes](#), [Horace](#), [Hume](#), [Kant](#), [La Mettrie](#), [Leo X](#), [Locke](#), [Lovecraft](#), [Machiavelli](#), [Milton](#), [Montaigne](#), [Newton](#), [Nietzsche](#), [Pope](#), [Rousseau](#), [Sagan](#), [Santayana](#), [Shakespeare](#), [Spenser](#), [Spinoza](#), [Stevenson](#), [Tennyson](#), [Thomsen](#), [Virgil](#), [Voltaire](#), [Whitman](#), and [Wordsworth](#).

Post by “Cassius” of November 13, 2025 at 7:15 AM

Here's the detail on what was mentioned in post 7 above. On page 56 Bernier/Gassendi is alleging (incorrectly in my view) that Epicurus did not make the statement that he would not know what good is but for the pleasures of sensation. Rather, he's alleging that this is a fraudulent statement inserted by Stoics. I'd say this is a gross error, and comes from failing to address Epicurean Canonics/Physics (probably due to the blinders of religion). Having not paid attention to that, Bernier/Gassendi fail to see that this statement is focused on the feelings/anticipations/senses as the Canonical test of knowledge, rather than a statement on practical ethics. He goes on at some length about this and it's a major problem - I'm just marking it here so we know where to find it starting on pdf page 56.



Post by “Robert” of November 13, 2025 at 11:23 PM

[Cassius](#) I can't help but be amused by Gassendi's tactic for defusing this problematic (from his point of view) Epicurean statement--blame it on the slanderous Stoics! But I notice that in "On the Nature of the Gods," it's Cotta the Academic Skeptic who references the controversial statement, not Balbus the Stoic. And Cotta gives the impression that the Epicurean saying was

well-known, originated from Epicurus himself, and was often repeated by Epicureans.

He also makes the connection to Epicurean physics that you allude to above--no good can be experienced apart from sensation. Conversely, Gassendi's objection to the statement would reflect his objection to materialism. As you suggest, his religious biases come into play.

Post by “Joshua” of November 14, 2025 at 2:03 AM

Yes, that fragment is remarkably well-attested:

Quote

[06] They say that he wrote to many other women of pleasure and particularly to Leontion, with whom Metrodorus was also in love; and that in the treatise On the End of Life he wrote, *'I know not how I can conceive the good, if I withdraw the pleasures of taste and withdraw the pleasures of love and those of hearing and sight.'*

-Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* Bailey Translation

Quote

Thus you speak: *“Nor can I form any notion of the chief good, abstracted from those pleasures which are perceived by taste, or from what depends on hearing music, or abstracted from ideas raised by external objects visible to the eye, or by agreeable motions, or from those other pleasures which are perceived by the whole man by means of any of his senses; nor can it possibly be said that the pleasures of the mind are excited only by what is good; for I have perceived men's minds to be pleased with the hopes of enjoying those things which I mentioned above, and with the idea that it should enjoy them without any interruption from pain.”* And these are his exact words, so that any one may understand what were the pleasures with which Epicurus was acquainted.

-Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, Yonge Translation

Quote

I do not suppose, Velleius, that you are like some of the Epicureans, who are ashamed of those expressions of Epicurus, in which he openly avows that he has no idea of any

good separate from wanton and obscene pleasures, which, without a blush, he names distinctly.

-Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*, Yonge Translation

Quote

For Epicurus says, without any concealment, but speaking with a loud voice, as it were, "For I am not able to distinguish what is good if you once take away the pleasure arising from sweet flavours, and if you also take away amatory pleasures." For this wise man thinks that even the life of the intemperate man is an unimpeachable one, if he enjoys an immunity from fear, and also mirth. On which account also the comic poets, running down the Epicureans, attack them as mere servants and ministers of pleasure and intemperance.

-Athenaeus, *The Banquet of the Learned*, Yonge Translation

Post by "Don" of November 14, 2025 at 6:50 AM

[Epicurus: Fragments - translation](#)

See U67 for even more (copied here for convenience. These include Joshua's citations, too; just with additional context.)

[U67]

Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, XII p. 546E: Not only Aristippus and his followers, but also Epicurus and his welcomed kinetic pleasure; I will mention what follows, to avoid speaking of the "storms" {of passion} and the "delicacies" which Epicurus often cites, and the "stimuli" which he mentions in his *On the End-Goal*. For he says "For I at least do not even know what I should conceive the good to be, if I eliminate the pleasures of taste, and eliminate the pleasures of sex, and eliminate the pleasures of listening, and eliminate the pleasant motions caused in our vision by a visible form."

Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, VII p. 280A: Again, in the work *On the End-Goal*, he says something like this: "As for myself, I cannot conceive of the good if exclude the pleasures derived from taste, or those derived from sexual intercourse, or those derived from entertainments to which we listen, or those derived from the motions of a figure delightful to the eye."

Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, VII p. 278F: For Epicurus does not speak with face muffled, but in a loud voice he declares: "As for myself, I cannot conceive of the good if exclude the pleasures

derived from taste, or those derived from sexual intercourse."

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Philosophers*, X.6: It is observed too that in his treatise *On the End-Goal*, he writes in these terms: "I know not how to conceive the good, apart from the pleasures of taste, sexual pleasures, the pleasures of sound, and the pleasures of beautiful form."

Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, III.18.41: Why do we shirk the question, Epicurus, and why do we not confess that we mean by pleasure what you habitually say it is, when you have thrown off all sense of shame? Are these your words or not? For instance, in that book which embraces all your teaching (for I shall now play the part of translator, so no one may think I am inventing) you say this: "For my part I find no meaning which I can attach to what is termed good, if I take away from it the pleasures obtained by taste, if I take away the pleasures which come from listening to music, if I take away too the charm derived by the eyes from the sight of figures in movement, or other pleasures by any of the senses in the whole man. Nor indeed is it possible to make such a statement as this - that it is joy of the mind which is alone to be reckoned as a good; for I understand by a mind in a state of joy, that it is so, when it has the hope of all the pleasures I have named - that is to say the hope that nature will be free to enjoy them without any blending of pain." And this much he says in the words I have quoted, so that anyone you please may realize what Epicurus understands by pleasure.

Ibid., III.20.46: For he has not only used the term pleasure, but stated clearly what he meant by it. "Taste," he says, "and embraces and spectacles and music and the shapes of objects fitted to give a pleasant impression to the eyes,"

Cicero, *On End-Goals, Good and Bad*, II.3.7 (Torquatus to Cicero): "Does not Epicurus recognize pleasure in your sense?" (Cicero): "Not always," said I, "now and then, I admit, he recognizes it only too fully, for he solemnly avows that he cannot even understand what good there can be or where it can be found, apart from that which is derived from food and drink, the delight of the ears, and the grosser forms of gratification. Do I misrepresent his words?" *Ibid.*, II.7.20: In a number of passages where he is commending that real pleasure which all of us call by the same name, he goes so far as to say that he cannot even imagine any Good that is not connected with pleasure of the kind intended by Aristippus. Such is the language that he uses in the lecture dealing solely with the topic of the Chief Good. II.8.23: Men of taste and refinement, with first-rate chefs... the accompaniment of dramatic performances and their usual sequel - these are pleasures without which Epicurus, as he loudly proclaims, does not know what Good is. II.10.29: But fancy his failing to see how strong a proof it is that the sort of pleasure, without which he declares he has no idea at all what Good means (and he defines it in detail as the pleasure of the palate, of the ears, and subjoins the other kinds of pleasure, which cannot be specified without an apology). I.10.30: the kinetic sort of pleasure ... he extols it so much that he tells us he is incapable even of imagining what other good there can be. II.20.64: ... Nor did he forgo those other indulgences in the absence of which Epicurus declares that he cannot understand what good is.

Cicero, *On The Nature of The Gods*, I.40.111 (Cotta speaking): Your school recognizes no pleasure of the mind which does not have its beginning and end in the physical body. I take it that you, Velleius, are not like the rest of our Epicureans, who are ashamed of those sayings of Epicurus in which he states that he does not understand how there can be anything good except sensual and sexual pleasures. And he then goes on quite unashamed to enumerate these pleasures one by one.

Cicero, *Against Lucius Calpurnius Piso*, 28.69: {Piso} would have it that Epicurus was an eloquent fellow; and indeed he does, I believe, assert that he cannot conceive any good apart from bodily pleasure.