

Extra Quotes: Jesus the Stoic Sage

(from Jesus the Stoic Sage: Parallel Teachings and Timeless Wisdom From Jesus and the Stoic Philosophers
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Deep Dive: Goodness Is Harmony With God and Nature

No one who wishes to manage a house or city with success: no one aspiring to guide the helm of state aright, can afford to dispense with aid from above.

Socrates, Memorabilia 1.1

Always remember the following: what the nature of the Whole is; what my own nature; the relation of this nature to that; what kind of part it is of what kind of Whole; and that no man can hinder your saying and doing at all times what is in accordance with that Nature whereof you are a part.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 2.9

As doctors have their instruments and scalpels always at hand to meet sudden demands for treatment, so do you have your doctrines ready in order to recognize the divine and human, and so to do everything, even the very smallest, as mindful of the bond which unites the divine and human; for you will not do any act well which concerns man without referring it to the divine; and the same is true of your conduct to God.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 3.13

If he is a foreigner in the Universe who does not recognize the essence of the Universe, no less is he a foreigner, who does not recognize what comes to pass in it. A fugitive is he who runs away from the reasonable law of his City; a blind man, he who shuts the eye of the mind; a beggar, he who has need of another and has not all that is necessary for life in himself; a tumor on the Universe, he who rebels and separates himself from the reason of our common nature because he is displeased with what comes to pass (for Nature who bore you, brings these things also into being); a fragment cut off from the City, he who cuts off his own soul from the soul of reasonable creatures, which is a unity.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.29

Make up your mind that you deserve every word and work that is according to Nature, and do not allow the ensuing blame or speech of any men to talk you over; but, if it is right to be done or said, do not count yourself undeserving of it. Those others have their own selves to govern them, and use their several inclinations. Don't look round at that, but walk the straight way, following your own and the common Nature, for the path of them both is one.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.3

How large a liberty man has to do nothing other than what God will commend, and to welcome all that God assigns to him as a consequence of Nature.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 12.11

Deep Dive: Reason and Conscience Are Our Divine Inheritance

Even people from all nations, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.

Romans 2:14-15

Letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace... for all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

Romans 8:6,14

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

1 John 3:21

This which had come to me has not come by chance, but I see plainly that it was better for me... That is the reason why the sign never interfered with me.

Socrates, Apology 41d

When people are questioned, if you put the questions well, they answer correctly of themselves about everything; and yet if they had not within them some knowledge and right reason, they could not do this.

Cebes agreeing with Socrates, Phaedo 73a

'What then? are not plants and animals also the works of God?' They are; but they are not superior things, nor yet parts of the Gods. But you are a superior thing; you are a portion separated from the deity; you have in yourself a certain portion of him. Why then are you ignorant of your own noble descent? ... You are carrying about a god with you, and you know it not. ... Have you not God with you? And do you seek for any other, when you have him? ... And what work of a human artist, for instance, has in itself the faculties which the artist shows in making it? Is it not just marble or bronze, or gold or ivory? ... But the works of God have power of motion, they breathe, they have the faculty of using the appearances of things, and the power of examining them. Being the work of such an artist do you dishonor him? And what shall I say, not only that he made you, but also entrusted you to yourself and made you a deposit to yourself? Will you not think of this too, but do you also dishonor your guardianship? ... He has delivered yourself to your own care, and says, 'I had no one fitter to entrust him to than yourself: keep him for me such as he is by nature, modest, faithful, erect, unterrified, free from passion and perturbation.'

Epictetus, Discourses 2.8.10-11,16-17,20-23

We come into the world with no natural notion of a right-angled triangle, or of a diesis (a quarter tone), or of a half tone; but we learn each of these things by a certain transmission according to art... But as to good and evil, and beautiful and ugly, and becoming and unbecoming, and happiness and misfortune, and proper and

improper, and what we ought to do and what we ought not to do, who ever came into the world without having an innate idea of them? ...we come into the world already taught as it were by nature some things on this matter...

Epictetus, Discourses 2.11.2-6

Attend, if it be only a short time, to your own ruling faculty. Consider what this is that you possess, and whence it came, this which uses all other faculties, and tries them, and selects and rejects.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.7.40

Deep Dive: You Are the Project

We don't neglect looking after anything because we despair of reaching the highest degree.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.2.37

I do not yet feel confidence in what I have learned and in what I have assented to: I still fear my own weakness. Let me get confidence and then you shall see a countenance such as I ought to have and an attitude such as I ought to have: then I will show to you the statue, when it is perfected, when it is polished. What do you expect? a supercilious countenance? Does the Zeus [statue] at Olympia lift up his brow? No, his look is fixed as becomes him who is ready to say 'Irrevocable is my word and shall not fail.'

Such will I show myself to you, faithful, modest, noble, free from perturbation—What, and immortal too, exempt from old age, and from sickness? No, but dying as becomes a god, sickening as becomes a god. This power I possess; this I can do. But the rest I do not possess, nor can I do. I will show the strengths of a philosopher. What are they? A desire never disappointed, an aversion which never falls on that which it would avoid, a proper pursuit, a diligent purpose, an assent which is not rash. These you shall see.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.8.24-29

It is no easy thing to do this only: to fulfil the promise of a man's nature. For what is a man? The answer is: a rational and mortal being. Then by the rational faculty from whom are we separated? From wild beasts. And from what others? From sheep and like animals. Take care then to do nothing like a wild beast—but if you do, you have lost the character of a man; you have not fulfilled your promise. See that you do nothing like a sheep—but if you do, in this case also the man is lost. What then do we do as sheep? When we act gluttonously, when we act lewdly, when we act rashly, filthily, inconsiderately, to what have we declined? To sheep. What have we lost? The rational faculty. When we act contentiously and harmfully and passionately and violently, to what have we declined? To wild beasts. ...in all these ways the promise of a man acting as a man is destroyed. ... Each man is improved and preserved by corresponding acts: ...modest actions preserve the modest man, and immodest actions destroy him; and actions of fidelity preserve the faithful man, and the contrary actions destroy him.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.9.1-12

And now I am your teacher, and you are instructed in my school. And I have this purpose, to make you free from restraint, compulsion, hindrance, to make you free, prosperous, happy, looking to God in everything small and great. And you are here to learn and practice these things. Why then do you not finish the work, if you also have such a purpose as you ought to have, and if I in addition to the purpose also have such qualification as I ought to have? What is that which is wanting? When I see an artificer and material lying by him, I expect the work. Here then is the artificer, here the material; what is it that we want? Is not the thing one that can be taught? It is. Is it not then in our power? The only thing of all that is in our power. Neither wealth is in our power, nor health, nor reputation, nor in a word anything else except the right use of impressions. This right use is by nature free from restraint, this alone is free from impediment. Why then do you not finish the work? Tell me the reason. For it is either through my fault that you do not finish it, or through your own fault, or through the nature of the thing. The thing itself is possible, and the only thing in

our power. It remains then that the fault is either in me or in you, or, what is nearer the truth, in both. Well then, are you willing that we begin at last to bring such a purpose into this school, and to take no notice of the past? Let us only make a beginning. Trust to me, and you will see.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.19.29-34

Examine a little at last, look around, stir yourself up, that you may know who you are.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.14.3

Bring forth then what is wholly in your power, freedom from guile, dignity, endurance of labour, distaste for pleasure, contentment with your portion, need of little, kindness, freedom, plain-living, reserve in speech, magnanimity. See you not how much you are able to bring forth, where there is no excuse of want of gift or want of facility, and yet you are content to keep a lower place?

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.5

What is your art? To be good.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 11.5

Deep Dive: The Eternal Divide

And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them: Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him from inside, those are they that really defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Mark 7:14-23

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

John 18:36-37

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:18

Disease is an impediment to the body, but not to the will, unless the will itself chooses. Lameness is an impediment to the leg, but not to the will. And add this reflection on the occasion of everything that happens; for you will find it an impediment to something else, but not to yourself.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 9

The condition and characteristic of an un instructed person is this: he never expects from himself profit nor harm, but from externals. The condition and characteristic of a philosopher is this: he expects all advantage and all harm from himself.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 48a

Deep Dive: You Must Decide

How long will you then still defer thinking yourself worthy of the best things, and in no matter transgressing the distinctive reason? Have you accepted the theorems, which it was your duty to agree to, and have you agreed to them? what teacher then do you still expect that you defer to him the correction of yourself? You are no longer a youth, but already a full-grown man. If then you are negligent and slothful, and are continually making procrastination after procrastination, and proposal after proposal, and fixing day after day, after which you will attend to yourself, you will not know that you are not making improvement, but you will continue ignorant both while you live and till you die. Immediately then think it right to live as a full-grown man, and one who is making proficiency, and let everything which appears to you to be the best be to you a law which must not be transgressed. And if anything laborious, or pleasant or glorious or inglorious be presented to you, remember that now is the contest, now are the Olympic games, and they cannot be deferred; and that it depends on one defeat and one giving way that progress is either lost or maintained. Socrates in this way became perfect, in all things improving himself, attending to nothing except to reason. But you, though you are not yet a Socrates, ought to live as one who wishes to be a Socrates.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 51

Remember how long you have been putting off these things, and how many times the gods have given you days of grace, and yet you do not use them. Now is it high time to perceive the kind of Universe whereof you are a part and the nature of the governor of the Universe from whom you subsist as an effluence, and that the term of your time is circumscribed, and that unless you use it to attain calm of mind, time will be gone and you will be gone and the opportunity to use it will not be yours again.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 2.4

Deep Dive: Virtue Leads to Joy and Peace

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4:7-8

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

3 John 1:4

Perfect reason is therefore the good peculiar to man; all other qualities he shares in some degree with animals and plants. . . . When this is right and has reached perfection, man's felicity is complete. Hence, if everything is praiseworthy and has arrived at the end intended by its nature, when it has brought its peculiar good to perfection, and if man's peculiar good is reason; then, if a man has brought his reason to perfection, he is praiseworthy and has reached the end suited to his nature. This perfect reason is called virtue, and is likewise that which is honorable.

Seneca, Moral Letters 76

Deep Dive: Vice Leads to Suffering and Misery

They themselves are the slaves of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

2 Peter 2:19

The wages of sin is death.

Romans 6:23

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.

Romans 1:28-31

The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other... Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:17-21

Deep Dive: Wisdom Lights the Way

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:7-8

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Colossians 1:9-10

Deep Dive: Justice Is Our Duty

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

1 John 4:20-21

Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. ...

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.

1 Timothy 5:1-4,8

Tell me, Euthydemus, what sort of thing do you take piety to be?

Something most fair and excellent, no doubt.

Can you tell me what sort of person the pious man is?

I should say (he answered) he is a man who honours the gods.

And is it allowable to honor the gods in any mode or fashion one likes? ...

No; there are laws in accordance with which one must do that.

Then he who knows these laws will know how he must honor the gods?

I think so (he answered). ...

But now, with regard to human beings; is it allowable to deal with men in any way one pleases?

No; with regard to men also, he will be a law-observing man who knows what things are lawful as concerning men, in accordance with which our dealings with one another must be conducted.

Then those who deal with one another in this way, deal with each other as they ought?

Obviously.

Socrates, Memorabilia 4.6

Duties are universally measured by relationships. Is a man a father? The precept is to take care of him, to yield to him in all things, to submit when he is reproachful, when he inflicts blows. But suppose that he is a bad father. Were you then by nature made akin to a good father? No; but to a father. Does a brother wrong you? Maintain then your own position towards him, and do not examine what he is doing, but what you must do that your will shall be conformable to nature. For another will not damage you, unless you choose: but you will be damaged then when you shall think that you are damaged. In this way then you will discover your duty from the relation of a neighbour, from that of a citizen, from that of a general, if you are accustomed to contemplate the relationships.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 30

Make yourself neither despot nor servant to any.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.31

Often he who omits an act does injustice, not only he who commits an act.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 9.5

It is best to achieve justice, since, as you see, failure is to fail in this.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 10.12

Deep Dive: Courage Gives Us Power

According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.
Philippians 1:20

Let all your work, therefore, have some purpose, and keep some object in view.
Seneca, On Tranquility of Mind 12

And what is Bravery? It is the impregnable fortress for our mortal weakness; when a man has surrounded himself therewith, he can hold out free from anxiety during life's siege; for he is using his own strength and his own weapons. At this point I would quote you a saying of our philosopher Posidonius: "There are never any occasions when you need to think yourself safe because you wield the weapons of Fortune; fight with your own! Fortune does not furnish arms against herself; hence men equipped against their foes are unarmed against Fortune herself."
Seneca, Moral Letters 118

Deep Dive: Temperance Is Nobility

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:24

Don't you know that in a race everyone runs, but only one person wins the prize? You need to work hard to win. Real competitors exercise self-control in all things. Athletes do it for an impermanent crown, but we do it for an everlasting one. So I train with purpose and I don't just throw punches into the air. I fight to keep my body under control and I make it submit to me, so I won't disqualify myself from teaching others.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you believe him to be a free man who is ruled by the pleasures of the body, and thereby cannot perform what is best? Certainly not. ... And does it appear to you that the incontinent man is merely hindered from doing what is noblest, or that further he is impelled to do what is most shameful? I think he is as much driven to the one as he is hindered from the other. And what sort of lords and masters are those, think you, who at once put a stop to what is best and enforce what is worst? Goodness knows, they must be the very worst of masters. And what sort of slavery do you take to be the worst? I should say slavery to the worst masters. It would seem then that the incontinent man is bound over to the worst sort of slavery, would it not? ...

Furthermore, if there be any joy in the pursuit of any noble study or in patient application to such rules as may enable a man to manage his body aright, or to administer his household well, or to prove himself useful to his friends and to the state, or to dominate his enemies — which things are the sources not only of advantage but of deepest satisfaction — to the continent and self-controlled it is given to reap the fruits of them in their performance. It is the incontinent who have neither part nor lot in any one of them. ...

And what is the distinction between a man devoid of self-control and the dullest of brute beasts? A man who foregoes all height of aim, who gives up searching for the best and strives only to gratify his sense of pleasure, is he better than the silliest of cattle? But to the self-controlled alone is it given to discover the hidden treasures. These, by word and by deed, they will pick out and make selection of them according to their kinds, choosing deliberately the good and holding aloof from the evil. Thus it is that man reaches the zenith, as it were, of goodness and happiness, thus it is that he becomes most capable of reasoning and discussion.

Socrates, *Memorabilia* 4.5

If a man has reported to you, that a certain person speaks ill of you, do not make any defense to what has been told you: but reply: 'The man did not know the rest of my faults, for he would not have mentioned these only.'

Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 33.9

Deep Dive: Truth Is Its Own Authority

They were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

Luke 4:32

And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part.

Mark 9:38-40

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

Luke 9:49-50

I shall never be ashamed to quote a bad author if what he says is good.

Seneca, On Tranquility of Mind 11.8

Deep Dive: Embrace Reality and Destiny

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

John 6:38

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

John 12:27

The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

John 18:11

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:11-13

We have been born into a monarchy: our liberty is to obey God.

Seneca, On the Happy Life 15

If you would have your children and your wife and your friends to live forever, you are silly; for you would have the things which are not in your power to be in your power, and the things which belong to others to be yours. So if you would have your servant to be free from faults, you are a fool; for you would have badness not to be badness, but something else. But if you wish not to fail in your desires, you are able to do that.

Practice then this which you are able to do.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 14a

As to piety towards the Gods you must know that this is the chief thing, to have right opinions about them, to think that they exist, and that they administer the All well and justly; and you must fix yourself in this principle, to obey them, and to yield to them in everything which happens, and voluntarily to follow it as being accomplished by the wisest intelligence. For if you do so, you will never either blame the Gods, nor will you accuse them of neglecting you. And it is not possible for this to be done in any other way than by withdrawing from the things which are not in our power, and by placing the good and the evil only in those things which are in our power. For if you think that any of the things which are not in our power is good or bad, it is absolutely necessary that, when you do not obtain what you wish, and when you fall into those things which you do not wish, you will find fault and hate those who are the cause of them.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 31.1-2

Remember that thou art an actor in a play, of such a kind as the author may choose; if short, of a short one; if long, of a long one: if he wishes you to act the part of a poor man, see that you act the part naturally; if the part of a lame man, of a magistrate, of a private person, do the same. For this is your duty, to act well the part

that is given to you; but to select the part, belongs to another.
Epictetus, Enchiridion 17

But whoso nobly yields unto necessity,
We hold him wise, and skill'd in things divine.
Epictetus, Enchiridion 53.2 (quoting Euripedes fragment 956)

To be instructed is this: to learn to wish that everything may happen as it does. And how do things happen? As the ordainer has ordained. ... Remembering then this disposition of things, we ought to go to be instructed, not that we may change the constitution of things—for we have not the power to do it, nor is it better that we should have the power—but in order that, as the things around us are what they are and by nature exist, we may maintain our minds in harmony with the things which happen.
Epictetus, Discourses 1.12.15-17

Accept everything contentedly. What then is the punishment of those who do not accept? It is to be what they are. Is any person dissatisfied with being alone? Let him be alone. Is a man dissatisfied with his parents? Let him be a bad son, and lament. Is he dissatisfied with his children? Let him be a bad father. Cast him into prison. What prison? Where he is already, for he is there against his will; and where a man is against his will, there he is in prison. So Socrates was not in prison, for he was there willingly.
Epictetus, Discourses 1.12.21-23

Is it in your power to take what assignment you choose? There has been given to you such a body as you have, such parents, such brethren, such a country, such a place in your country:—then you come to me and say, 'Change my assignment.' Have you not abilities which enable you to manage the assignment which has been given to you?
Epictetus, Discourses 1.29.39

Chrysippus therefore said well, 'So long as future things are uncertain, I always cling to those which are more adapted to the conservation of that which is according to nature;' for God himself has given me the faculty of such choice. But if I knew that it was fated for me to be sick, I would even move towards it; for the foot also, if it had intelligence, would move to go into the mud.
Epictetus, Discourses 2.6.9-10

A tribunal and a prison are each a place, one high and the other low; but the will can be maintained equal, if you choose to maintain it equal in each. And we shall then be imitators of Socrates, when we are able to write hymns in prison.
Epictetus, Discourses 2.6.25-26

When you make any charge against Providence, consider, and you will learn that the thing has happened according to reason.
Epictetus, Discourses 3.17.1

To desire then things which are impossible is to have a slavish character, and is foolish: it is the part of a

stranger, of a man who fights against God in the only way that he can, by his opinions.
Epictetus, Discourses 3.24.21

I have never been hindered in my will, nor compelled when I did not will. And how is this possible? I have placed my movements towards action in obedience to God. Is it his will that I shall have fever? It is my will also. Is it his will that I should move towards anything? It is my will also. Is it his will that I should obtain anything? It is my wish also. Does he not will? I do not wish. Is it his will that I die, is it his will that I be put to the rack? It is my will then to die, it is my will then to be put to the rack. Who then is still able to hinder me contrary to my own judgment, or to compel me? No more than he can hinder or compel Zeus.
Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.89-90

How do you understand 'attaching yourself to God?' In this sense: that whatever God wills, a man also shall will; and what God does not will, a man also shall not will. How then shall this be done? In what other way than by examining the acts of God and his administration? ... Why then do I fight against God? Why do I will what does not depend on the will? Why do I will to have absolutely what is not granted to me? But how ought I to will to have things? In the way in which they are given and as long as they are given. But he who has given takes away. Why then do I resist? ... I would be a fool if I tried to use force on one who is stronger, but I would also be unjust.
Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.99-101

He who is dissatisfied with things present and what is given by fortune is an ignorant man in life: but he who bears them nobly and rationally and the things which proceed from them is worthy of being considered a good man.
Epictetus, Fragments

Make trial for yourself how the life of the good man, too, fares well, of the man pleased with what is assigned from Universal Nature and contented by his own just action and kind disposition.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.25

In the whole of things there is one connecting harmony, and as out of all material bodies the world is made perfect into a connected body, so out of all causes the order of Nature is made perfect into one connected cause. Even quite simple folk have in their minds what I am saying... Accordingly let us accept these orders as we accept what Aesculapius orders. Many of them, too, are assuredly severe, yet we welcome them in hopes of health. ...

Thus there are two reasons why you must be content with what happens to you: first because it was for you it came to pass, for you it was ordered and to you it was related, a thread of destiny stretching back to the most ancient causes; secondly because that which has come to each individually is a cause of the welfare and the completion and in very truth of the actual continuance of that which governs the Whole. For the perfect Whole is mutilated if you sever the least part of the contact and continuity alike of its causes as of its members; and you do this so far as in you lies, whenever you are disaffected, and in a measure you are destroying it.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.8

To Nature, who bestows all things and takes them away, the man who has learnt his lesson and respects himself says: 'Give what is thy good pleasure, take back what is thy good pleasure'; and this he says not boasting himself but only listening to her voice and being of one mind with her.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 10.14

Deep Dive: Prioritize Virtue

And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

Matthew 8:21-22

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Matthew 13:44-46

For many are called, but few are chosen.

Matthew 22:14

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

Luke 17:33

Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Luke 18:28-30

Of this one thing make sure against your dying day: let your faults die before you die.

Seneca, Moral Letters 27

Are you not ashamed to reserve for yourself only the remnants of your life and to set apart for wisdom only that time that you can't devote to business?

Seneca, On the Shortness of Life 3

Let virtue lead the way and bear the standard: we shall have pleasure for all that, but we shall be her masters and controllers; she may win some concessions from us, but will not force us to do anything. On the contrary, those who have permitted pleasure to lead the way, have neither one nor the other: for they lose virtue altogether, and yet they do not possess pleasure, but are possessed by it, and are either tortured by its absence or choked by its excess, being wretched if deserted by it, and yet more wretched if overwhelmed by it.

Seneca, On the Happy Life 14

It is a mark of a mean capacity to spend much time on the things which concern the body... These things should be done as subordinate things: and let all your care be directed to the mind.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 41

For this reason the good is preferred to every other relationship. There is no intimate relationship between me and my father, but there is between me and the good. 'Are you so hard-hearted?' Yes, for such is my nature; and this is the coin which God has given me. For this reason if the good is something different from the beautiful and the just, both father is gone, and brother and country, and everything. But shall I overlook my own good, in order that you may have it, and shall I give it up to you? Why? 'I am your father.' But you are not my good. 'I am your brother.' But you are not my good. But if we place the good in a right determination of the will, the very observance of the relations of life is good, and accordingly he who gives up any external things, obtains that which is good. Your father takes away your property. But he does not injure you. Your brother will have the greater part of the estate in land. Let him have as much as he chooses. Will he then have a greater share of modesty, of fidelity, of brotherly affection? For who will eject you from this possession?

Epictetus, Discourses 3.3.5-10

What then is that about which a man ought to spend his pains? This one thing: right understanding, neighbourly behaviour, speech which would never lie, and a disposition welcoming all which comes to pass, as necessary, as familiar, as flowing from a source and fountain like itself.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.33

You are a spirit bearing the weight of a dead body, as Epictetus used to say.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.41

If a man were to conceive the existence of real goods, like wisdom, temperance, justice, fortitude, he could not with those in his mind still listen to the popular proverb about 'goods in every corner', for it will not fit.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.12

What is left to be valued? To my thinking to move and to be held back according to man's proper constitution... Here, then, is what is of true value, and if this be well, you will not endeavour to obtain for yourself any one of the rest. Will you not cease to value many other things besides? Then you will not be free or self-contained or passionless; for you will be obliged to entertain envy and rivalry, to regard with suspicion those who are able to take away those things, to plot against those who have what is valued by you. To sum up, he who feels the want of any one of those things must be sullied thereby and besides must often blame the gods. But to reverence and value your own understanding will make you acceptable to yourself, harmonious with your fellows, and in concord with the gods; that is, praising whatsoever they assign and have ordained.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.16

It is absurdly wrong that, in this life where your body does not give in, your spirit should be the first to surrender.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.29

'There is no robber who can steal your will,' as Epictetus says.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 11.36

How is the governing self employing itself? For therein is everything. The rest are either within your will or without it, ashes and smoke.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 12.33

Deep Dive: Don't Overvalue Externals

Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.
1 Timothy 6:5-11

Our motto, as you know, is "Live according to Nature"; but it is quite contrary to nature to torture the body, to hate unlaboured elegance, to be dirty on purpose, to eat food that is not only plain, but disgusting and forbidding. Just as it is a sign of luxury to seek out dainties, so it is madness to avoid that which is customary and can be purchased at no great price. Philosophy calls for plain living, but not for penance; and we may perfectly well be plain and neat at the same time. This is the mean of which I approve; our life should observe a happy medium between the ways of a sage and the ways of the world at large; all men should admire it, but they should understand it also. ... He is a great man who uses earthenware dishes as if they were silver; but he is equally great who uses silver as if it were earthenware. It is the sign of an unstable mind not to be able to endure riches.

Seneca, Moral Letters 5

Nature's wants are slight; the demands of opinion are boundless. Suppose that the property of many millionaires is heaped up in your possession. Assume that Fortune carries you far beyond the limits of a private income, decks you with gold, clothes you in purple, and brings you to such a degree of luxury and wealth that you can bury the earth under marble floors; that you may not only possess, but tread upon, riches. Add statues, paintings, and whatever any art has devised for the luxury; you will only learn from such things to crave still greater.

Natural desires are limited; but those which spring from false opinion have no stopping-point. The false has no limits. When you are travelling on a road, there must be an end; but when astray, your wanderings are limitless. Recall your steps, therefore, from idle things, and when you would know whether that which you seek is based upon a natural or upon a misleading desire, consider whether it can stop at any definite point. If you find, after having travelled far, that there is a more distant goal always in view, you may be sure that this condition is contrary to nature.

Seneca, Moral Letters 16

The acquisition of riches has been for many men, not an end, but a change, of troubles. I do not wonder. For the fault is not in the wealth, but in the mind itself. That which had made poverty a burden to us, has made riches also a burden. Just as it matters little whether you lay a sick man on a wooden or on a golden bed, for whithersoever he be moved he will carry his malady with him; so one need not care whether the diseased mind is bestowed upon riches or upon poverty. His malady goes with the man.

Seneca, Moral Letters 17

Related to and in harmony with extravagance in houses is all the matter of furnishings within the house—couches, tables, coverlets, drinking cups, and similar objects—completely surpassing all needs and going far beyond necessity. There are ivory and silver, yes, even golden couches, tables of similar materials, coverlets of purple and other colors difficult to obtain, cups made of gold and silver, some of marble or some similar material rivalling gold and silver in costliness. All these things are eagerly sought for, although a pallet furnishes us a place to lie on no worse than a silver or ivory couch, and a rough cloak is quite as suitable to cover it as a purple or crimson coverlet; it is possible for us to eat quite safely from a wooden table without longing for one of silver. Yes, and one can drink from earthenware cups which are quite as good for quenching the thirst as goblets of gold; and the wine which is poured into them is not tainted, but yields a fragrance sweeter than from cups of gold or silver. In general, one would rightly judge what is good and bad in furnishings by these three criteria: acquisition, use, and preservation. Whatever is difficult to obtain or not convenient to use or not easy to protect is to be judged inferior; but what we acquire with no difficulty and use with satisfaction and find easy to keep is superior. For this reason earthenware and iron and similar vessels are much better than those of silver or gold, because their acquisition is less trouble since they are cheaper, their usefulness is greater since we can safely expose them to heat and fire (which cannot be done with others), and guarding them is less of a problem, for the inexpensive ones are less likely to be stolen than the expensive ones. No small part of preserving them too is keeping them clean, which is a more expensive matter with costly ones. Just as a horse which is bought for a small price but is able to fulfill many needs is more desirable than one which does little although he was bought for a great price, so in the matter of furnishings the cheaper and more serviceable are better than the more costly and less serviceable ones. Why is it, then, that the rare and expensive pieces are sought after rather than those which are available and cheap? It is because the things which are really good and fine are not recognized, and in place of them those which only seem good are eagerly sought by the foolish. ... For my part, then, I would choose sickness rather than luxury, for sickness harms only the body, but luxury destroys both body and soul, causing weakness and impotence in the body and lack of self-control and cowardice in the soul.

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 20

Never say about anything, 'I have lost it', but say 'I have returned it'. Is your child dead? It has been returned. Is your wife dead? She has been returned. Has your estate been taken from you? Has not then this also been returned? 'But he who has taken it from me is a bad man.' But what is it to you, by whose hands the giver demanded it back? So long as he may allow you, take care of it as a thing which belongs to another, as travellers do with their inn.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 11

When a thing is taken away, give it up readily and immediately, and be thankful for the time that you had the use of it, unless you would rather cry for your nurse and you mommy.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.16.28

'What then have I need of?' Of that which you have not: of firmness, of a mind which is conformable to nature, of being free from perturbation. Whether I have a patron or not, what is that to me? But it is something to you. I am richer than you: I am not anxious what Caesar will think of me. For this reason, I flatter no man. This is what I possess instead of vessels of silver and gold. You have utensils of gold; but your

discourse, your opinions, your assents, your pursuits, your desires are of earthen ware. But when I have these things conformable to nature, why should I not employ my studies also upon reason? for I have leisure: my mind is not distracted. What shall I do, since I have no distraction? What more suitable to a man have I than this? When you have nothing to do, you are disturbed, you go to the theatre or you wander about without a purpose. Why should not the philosopher labor to improve his reason? You employ yourself about crystal vessels; I employ myself about the syllogism named the Liar [famous paradoxical thought experiment]; you about myrrhine vessels; I employ myself about the syllogism named the Denier [another thought experiment]. To you everything appears small that you possess; to me all that I have appears great. Your desire is insatiable; mine is satisfied.

To children who put their hand into a narrow-necked earthen vessel and bring out figs and nuts, this happens: if they fill the hand, they cannot take it out, and then they cry. Drop a few of them and you will draw things out. And so you should part with some of your desires: do not desire many things and you will have what you want.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.9.17-22

Do you not suppose that Homer wrote the Iliad that we may learn that those of noblest birth, the strongest and the richest, the most handsome, when they have not the judgment which they ought to have, are not prevented from being most wretched and unfortunate?

Epictetus, Discourses 4.10.36

Well, then, shall mere glory distract you? Look at the swiftness of the oblivion of all men; the gulf of endless time, behind and before; the hollowness of applause, the fickleness and folly of those who seem to speak well of you, and the narrow room in which it is confined. This should make you pause. For the entire earth is a point in space, and how small a corner thereof is this your dwelling place, and how few and how paltry those who will sing your praises here!

Finally, therefore, remember your retreat into this little domain which is yourself... And among what is most ready to hand into which you will look have these two: the one, that things do not take hold upon the mind, but stand without unmoved, and that disturbances come only from the judgement within; the second, that all that your eyes behold will change in a moment and be no more; and of how many things you have already witnessed the changes, think continually of that. The Universe is change, life is judgment.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.3.3-4

A man ought to treasure none of these things, which does not fall to a man's portion. They are not requirements of a man, nor does man's nature profess them, nor are they accomplishments of man's nature. Accordingly man's end does not lie in them, and certainly not the good which is complementary to his end. Moreover, if any of these were given as his portion to man, it would not have been his portion to disdain them and to resist them, nor would the man who made himself independent of them have been laudable nor the man who took less of them than he might, have been good, if they were really 'goods'. But as things are, the more a man robs himself of these and other such, the more he forbears when he is robbed of them, so much the more is he good.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.15

Deep Dive: Greatness Requires Humility

And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

Mark 12:24

And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Luke 14:7-11

And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

John 9:39-41

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

Ephesians 4:17-18

If a man has reported to you, that a certain person speaks ill of you, do not make any defense to what has been told you: but reply, 'The man did not know the rest of my faults, for he would not have mentioned these only.' ... In company take care not to speak much and excessively about your own acts or adventures.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 33.9,14

The signs of one who is making progress are these: he censures no man, he praises no man, he blames no man, he accuses no man, he says nothing about himself as if he were somebody or knew something; when he is impeded at all or hindered, he blames himself: if a man praises him, he ridicules the praiser to himself: if a man censures him, he makes no defense. ... He employs a moderate movement towards everything: whether he is considered foolish or ignorant, he cares not: and in a word he watches himself as if he were an enemy and lying in ambush.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 48b

Deep Dive: Anger Stirs Up Trouble

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.
Ephesians 4:31

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.
James 1:19-20

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.
1 John 3:15

The greatest remedy for anger is delay.
Seneca, On Anger 2.28

“Ungoverned anger begets madness.” You cannot help knowing the truth of these words, since you have had not only servants, but also enemies. But indeed this emotion blazes out against all sorts of persons; it springs from love as much as from hate, and shows itself not less in serious matters than in jest and sport. And it makes no difference how important the provocation may be, but into what kind of soul it penetrates. Similarly with fire; it does not matter how great is the flame, but what it falls upon. For solid timbers have repelled a very great fire; conversely, dry and easily inflammable stuff nourishes the slightest spark into a conflagration. So it is with anger, my dear Lucilius; the outcome of a mighty anger is madness, and hence anger should be avoided, not merely that we may escape excess, but that we may have a healthy mind.
Seneca, Moral Letters 18

Deep Dive: Cast Your Fears Away

And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

Matthew 17:6-7

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

1 John 4:18

Why, indeed, is it necessary to summon trouble, which must be endured soon enough when it has once arrived, or to anticipate trouble and ruin the present through fear of the future? It is indeed foolish to be unhappy now because you may be unhappy at some future time.

Seneca, Moral Letters 24

But what is greater madness than to be tortured by the future and not to save your strength for the actual suffering, but to invite and bring on wretchedness? If you cannot be rid of it, you ought at least to postpone it. Will you not understand that no man should be tormented by the future?

Seneca, Moral Letters 74

Even in the midst of safety you will have no confidence if your mind has once been given a shock; once it has acquired the habit of blind panic, it is incapable of providing even for its own safety. For it does not avoid danger, but runs away. Yet we are more exposed to danger when we turn our backs.

Seneca, Moral Letters 104

Is kinship with Caesar or with any other of the powerful in Rome sufficient to enable us to live in safety, and above contempt and without any fear at all? And to have God for your maker and father and guardian, shall not this release us from sorrows and fears? But a man may say, 'Whence shall I get bread to eat when I have nothing?' And how do slaves and runaways—on what do they rely when they leave their masters? Do they rely on their lands or slaves, or their vessels of silver? They rely on nothing but themselves; and food does not fail them. And shall it be necessary for one among us who is a philosopher to travel into foreign parts, and trust to and rely on others, and not to take care of himself, and shall he be inferior to irrational animals and more cowardly, each of which being self-sufficient, neither fails to get its proper food, nor to find a suitable way of living, and one conformable to nature?

Epictetus, Discourses 1.9.7-9

What paradox do the philosophers assert if they say that where things are not dependent on the will, there you should employ confidence, but where they are dependent on the will, there you should employ caution? For if the bad consists in a bad exercise of the will, caution ought only to be used where things are dependent on the will. But if things independent of the will and not in our power are nothing to us, with respect to these we must employ confidence; and thus we shall both be cautious and confident, and indeed confident because

of our caution. For by employing caution towards things which are really bad, it will result that we shall have confidence with respect to things which are not so.

We are then in the condition of deer when they flee from the huntsmen's feathers in fright; whither do they turn and in what do they seek refuge as safe? They turn to the nets, and thus they perish by confounding things which are objects of fear with things that they ought not to fear. Thus we also act: in what cases do we fear? In things which are independent of the will. In what cases on the contrary do we behave with confidence, as if there were no danger? In things dependent on the will. To be deceived then, or to act rashly, or shamelessly or with base desire to seek something, does not concern us at all, if we only hit the mark in things which are independent of our will. But where there is death, or exile or pain or infamy, there we attempt to run away, there we are struck with terror. Therefore as we may expect it to happen with those who err in the greatest matters, we convert natural confidence into audacity, desperation, rashness, shamelessness; and we convert natural caution and modesty into cowardice and meanness, which are full of fear and confusion. For if a man should transfer caution to those things in which the will may be exercised and the acts of the will, he will immediately by willing to be cautious have also the power of avoiding what he chooses: but if he transfer it to the things which are not in his power and will, and attempt to avoid the things which are in the power of others, he will of necessity fear, he will be unstable, he will be disturbed.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.1.5-13

You endure a myriad troubles because you are not content with your governing self doing the kind of things it was formed to do. But enough.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 9.26

Deep Dive: Acknowledge Death as Part of Life

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Philippians 1:21

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

1 Corinthians 15:54-55

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

1 John 2:17

This which has happened to me is doubtless a good thing, and those of us who think death is an evil must be mistaken. A convincing proof of this has been given to me; for the accustomed sign would surely have opposed me if I had not been going to meet with something good.

Socrates, Apology 40b-40c

No evil can come to a good man either in life or after death, and God does not neglect him. So, too, this which had come to me has not come by chance, but I see plainly that it was better for me to die now and be freed from troubles. ... But now the time has come to go away. I go to die, and you to live; but which of us goes to the better lot, is known to none but God.

Socrates, Apology 41d, 42a

If God is pleased to add another day, we should welcome it with glad hearts. That man is happiest, and is secure in his own possession of himself, who can await the morrow without apprehension. When a man has said: 'I have lived!', every morning he arises he receives a bonus.

Seneca, Moral Letters 12

'How long will you act thus?' So long as reason requires me to be with the body: but when reason does not require this, take away the body, and fare you well. Only we must not do it inconsiderately, nor weakly, nor for any slight reason; for, on the other hand, God does not wish it to be done, and he has need of such a world and such inhabitants in it. But if he sounds the signal for retreat, as he did to Socrates, we must obey him who gives the signal, as if he were a general.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.29.28-29

Then after receiving everything from another and even yourself, are you angry and do you blame the giver if he takes anything from you? Who are you, and for what purpose did you come into the world? Did not he introduce you here, did he not show you the light, did he not give you fellow workers, and perceptions and reason? And as whom did he introduce you here? Did he not introduce you as subject to death, and as one to live on the earth with a little flesh, and to observe his administration, and to join with him in the spectacle and

the festival for a short time? Will you not then, as long as you have been permitted, after seeing the spectacle and the solemnity, when he leads you out, go with adoration of him and thanks for what you have heard and seen? ... Go away like a grateful and modest man; make room for others: others also must be born, as you were, and being born they must have a place, and houses and necessary things.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.103-106

'But your head will be taken off!'

Does the tyrant's head always remain where it is, and the heads of you who obey him?

'But you will be cast out unburied.'

If the corpse is I, I shall be cast out; but if I am different from the corpse, speak more properly according as the fact is, and do not think of frightening me. These things are formidable to children and fools. But if any man has once entered a philosopher's school and knows not what he is, he deserves to be full of fear and to flatter those whom afterwards he used to flatter; and if he has not yet learned that he is not flesh nor bones nor sinews, but he is that which makes use of these parts of the body and governs there and understands the appearances of things.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.7.31-32

In the conviction that it is possible you may depart from life at once, act and speak and think in every case accordingly. But to leave the company of men is nothing to fear, if gods exist; for they would not involve you in ill. If, however, they do not exist or if they take no care for man's affairs, why should I go on living in a world void of gods, or void of providence? But they do exist, and they do care for men's lives, and they have put it entirely in a man's power not to fall into real ills; for the rest, if anything were an ill, they would have provided also for this, that it may be in every man's power not to fall into it; (and how could what does not make a man worse make his life worse?) But the nature of the Whole would not have winked at these things either out of ignorance or because (though it knew of them) it had not the power to guard against them or to put them right; neither would it have made so vast an error, from want of power or skill, as to permit good and ill to befall indifferently, both good and bad men equally. Now death, and life, good report and evil report, pain and pleasure, wealth and poverty, these all befall men, good and bad alike, equally, and are themselves neither right nor wrong: they are therefore neither good nor ill.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 2.11

Hippocrates, after curing many sicknesses, himself fell sick and died. The Chaldean astrologers foretold the death of many persons, then the hour of fate overtook them also. Alexander, Pompeius, and Julius Caesar, after so often utterly destroying whole towns and slaying in the field many myriads of horse and foot, themselves also one day departed from life. Heraclitus, after many speculations about the fire which should consume the Universe, was waterlogged by dropsy, poulticed himself with cow-dung and died. Vermin killed Democritus; another kind of vermin Socrates. What is the moral? You went on board, you set sail, you have made the port. Step ashore: if to a second life, nothing is void of gods, not even in that other world; but if to unconsciousness, you will cease to suffer pains and pleasures and to be the servant of an earthly vessel as far inferior as that which does it service is superior; for the one is mind and deity, the other clay and gore.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 3.3

Never value as an advantage to yourself what will force you one day to break your word, to abandon self-

respect, to hate, suspect, execrate another, to act a part, to covet anything that calls for walls or coverings to conceal it. A man who puts first his own mind and divinity, and the holy rites of its excellence, makes no scene, utters no groans, will need neither the refuge of solitude nor the crowded streets. What is most worth while, he will pass his days neither in pursuit nor in avoidance, and it is no concern at all of his whether the time be longer or shorter for which he shall have the use of the soul in its bodily envelope; for even if he must be released at once, he will depart as easily as he would perform any other act that can be done with reverence and sobriety, being careful all his life of this one thing alone that his understanding be not found in any state which is foreign to a reasonable social being.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 3.7

Death is like birth, a mystery of Nature; a coming together out of identical elements and a dissolution into the same. Looked at generally this is not a thing of which man should be ashamed, for it is contrary neither to what is conformable to a reasonable creature nor to the principle of his constitution.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.5

You came into the world as a part. You will vanish in that which gave you birth, or rather you will be taken up into its generative reason by the process of change.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.14

Many grains of incense upon the same altar; one falls first, another later, but difference there is none.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.15

Alexander the Great and his stable boy were levelled in death, for they were either taken up into the same life-giving principles of the Universe or were scattered without distinction into atoms.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.24

Death is repose from sense-response, from the stimulus of impulse, from intellectual analysis and the service of the flesh.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.28

As though you were now dead and have not lived your life up to the present moment, use the balance remaining to live henceforward according to Nature.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.56

Disdain not death, but be well satisfied with it, because this, too, is one of the things which Nature wills. For as are adolescence and old age, growth and maturity, development of teeth and beard and grey hair, begetting, conception and childbearing and the rest of the natural functions which life's seasons bring, such also is actual dissolution. This, therefore, is like a man of trained reason, not to be rash or violent or disdainful in the face of death, but to wait for it as one of the natural functions; and, as you now wait for the unborn child to come forth from your wife's womb, so expect the hour in which your soul will drop from this shell.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 9.3

Mortal man, you have been a citizen in this great City; what does it matter to you whether for five or fifty

years? For what is according to its laws is equal for every man. Why is it hard, then, if Nature who brought you in, and no despot nor unjust judge, sends you out of the City—as though the master of the show, who engaged an actor, were to dismiss him from the stage? 'But I have not spoken my five acts, only three.' 'What you say is true, but in life three acts are the whole play.' For He determines the perfect whole, the cause yesterday of your composition, to-day of your dissolution; you are the cause of neither. Leave the stage, therefore, and be reconciled, for He also who lets his servant depart is reconciled.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 12:36 (the last entry in his journals)

Deep Dive: Don't Covet

From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

James 4:1-3

The diseases of the mind are hardened and chronic vices, such as greed and ambition; they have enfolded the mind in too close a grip, and have begun to be permanent evils thereof. To give a brief definition: by "disease" we mean a persistent perversion of the judgment, so that things which are mildly desirable are thought to be highly desirable. Or, if you prefer, we may define it thus: to be too zealous in striving for things which are only mildly desirable or not desirable at all.

Seneca, Moral Letters 75

Take care then when you observe a man honoured before others or possessed of great power or highly esteemed for any reason, not to suppose him happy, and be not carried away by the impression. For if the nature of the good is in our power, neither envy nor jealousy will have a place in us. But you yourself will not wish to be a general or senator or consul, but a free man.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 19b

Deep Dive: Subordinate Pleasure to Joy

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Explain by facts, and not mere words, the hideousness of drunkenness, and its haunting evils. Do that which is easiest of all - namely, demonstrate that what men call pleasures are punishments as soon as they have exceeded due bounds.

Seneca, Moral Letters 83

Those who rate pleasure as the supreme ideal hold that the Good is a matter of the senses; but we Stoics maintain that it is a matter of the understanding, and we assign it to the mind. If the senses were to pass judgment on what is good, we should never reject any pleasure; for there is no pleasure that does not attract, no pleasure that does not please. Conversely, we should undergo no pain voluntarily; for there is no pain that does not clash with the senses. Besides, those who are too fond of pleasure and those who fear pain to the greatest degree would in that case not deserve reproof. But we condemn men who are slaves to their appetites and their lusts, and we scorn men who, through fear of pain, will dare no manly deed. But what wrong could such men be committing if they looked merely to the senses as arbiters of good and evil? For it is to the senses that you and yours have entrusted the test of things to be sought and things to be avoided! Reason, however, is surely the governing element in such a matter as this; as reason has made the decision concerning the happy life, and concerning virtue and honour also, so she has made the decision with regard to good and evil. For with them the vilest part is allowed to give sentence about the better, so that the senses—dense as they are, and dull, and even more sluggish in man than in the other animals,—pass judgment on the Good.

Seneca, Moral Letters 124

Deep Dive: Get Out of Your Comfort Zone

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

2 Corinthians 12:10

To the remark of another who complained that he did not take his food with pleasure, he said: "Acumenus has a good prescription for that." And when the other asked: "And what may that be?" "To stop eating," he said. "On the score of pleasure, economy, and health, total abstinence has much in its favor."

Socrates, Memorabilia 3.12

No man loses anything by the frowns of Fortune unless he has been deceived by her smiles: those who have enjoyed her bounty as though it were their own heritage forever, and who have chosen to take precedence of others because of it, lie in abject sorrow when her unreal and fleeting delights forsake their empty childish minds, that know nothing about solid pleasure: but he who has not been puffed up by success, does not collapse after failure: he possesses a mind of tried constancy, superior to the influences of either state; for even in the midst of prosperity he has experimented upon his powers of enduring adversity.

Seneca, On Consolation to Helvia 5

Deep Dive: Develop Healthy Indifference

But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not using it too much: for the form of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness.

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

1 Peter 1:24-25

I will return again unto you, if God will.

Acts 18:21

I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will.

1 Corinthians 4:19

For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

1 Corinthians 16:7

And this will we do, if God permit.

Hebrews 6:3

In everything which pleases the soul, or supplies a want, or is loved, remember to add this to the notion; what is the nature of each thing, beginning from the smallest? If you love an earthen vessel, say it is an earthen vessel which you love; for when it has been broken, you will not be disturbed. If you are kissing your child or wife, say that it is a human being whom you are kissing, for when the wife or child dies, you will not be disturbed.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 3

If you intend to improve, throw away such thoughts as these: 'if I neglect my affairs, I shall not have the means of living' and 'unless I chastise my servant, he will be bad.' For it is better to die of hunger and so to be released from grief and fear than to live in abundance with perturbation; and it is better for your servant to be bad than for you to be unhappy. Begin then from little things. Is the oil spilled? Is a little wine stolen? Say on the occasion, at such price is sold freedom from perturbation; at such price is sold tranquillity, but nothing is got for nothing. And when you call your servant, consider that it is possible that he does not hear; and if he does hear, that he will do nothing which you wish. But it is you, not him, that has the power for you to be undisturbed.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 12

Remember that in life you ought to behave as at a banquet. Suppose that something is carried round and is opposite to you. Stretch out your hand and take a portion with decency. Suppose that it passes by you. Do not detain it. Suppose that it is not yet come to you. Do not send your desire forward to it, but wait till it is opposite to you. Do so with respect to children, so with respect to a wife, so with respect to magisterial offices, so with respect to wealth, and you will be some time a worthy partner of the banquets of the gods. But if you take none of the things which are set before you, and even despise them, then you will be not only a fellow banqueter with the gods, but also a partner with them in power.
Epictetus, Enchiridion 15

We may learn the will of nature from the things in which we do not differ from one another. For instance, when your neighbour's servant has broken his cup, or anything else, we are ready to say forthwith, that it is one of the things which happen. You must know then that when your cup also is broken, you ought to think as you did when your neighbour's cup was broken. Transfer this reflection to greater things also. Is another man's child or wife dead? There is no one who would not say 'this is an event incident to man.' But when a man's own child or wife is dead, forthwith he calls out, 'Woe to me, how wretched I am.' But we ought to remember how we feel when we hear that it has happened to others.
Epictetus Enchiridion 26

How then is an acropolis demolished? Not by the sword, not by fire, but by judgment. For if we abolish the acropolis which is in the city, can we abolish also that of fever, and that of beautiful women? Can we in a word abolish the acropolis which is in us and cast out the tyrants within us, whom we have daily over us, sometimes the same tyrants, at other times different tyrants? But with this we must begin, and with this we must demolish the acropolis and eject the tyrants, by giving up the body, the parts of it, the faculties of it, the possessions, the reputation, magisterial offices, honors, children, brothers, friends, by considering all these things as belonging to others. And if tyrants have been ejected from us, why do I still shut in the acropolis by a wall of circumvallation, at least on my account; for if it still stands, what does it do to me? Why do I still eject the tyrant's guards? For where do I perceive them? It is against others they have their fasces, and their spears and their swords.
Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.86-88

All is ephemeral, both what remembers and what is remembered.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4:35

Did an obstacle oppose your impulse? If you started out to satisfy it without mental reservation, the obstacle is at once injurious to you as a reasonable being; but if you experience the general lot, you are not yet hurt or hindered. The properties of the mind, you know, no one else is wont to hinder, for neither fire nor steel nor despot nor abuse affect it one whit, when it has become 'a sphere rounded and at rest'.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 8.41

Deep Dive: Replace Bad Habits With Good Ones

Put away the corrupt and lustful behaviors of your old selves, and rejuvenate your mind in the spirit; and put on your new selves, which are truly made according to God in justice and piety. ... Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:22-24, 27

Every habit and faculty is maintained and increased by the corresponding actions: the habit of walking by walking, the habit of running by running. If you would be a good reader, read; if a writer, write. But when you shall not have read for thirty days in succession, but have done something else, you will know the consequence. In the same way, if you shall have lain down ten days, get up and attempt to make a long walk, and you will see how your legs are weakened. Generally then if you would make anything a habit, do it; if you would not make it a habit, do not do it, but accustom yourself to do something else in place of it.

So it is with respect to the affections of the soul: when you have been angry, you must know that not only has this evil befallen you, but that you have also increased the habit, and in a manner thrown fuel upon fire.

When you have been overcome in sexual intercourse with a person, do not reckon this single defeat only, but reckon that you have also nurtured, increased your incontinence. For it is impossible for habits and faculties, some of them not to be produced, when they did not exist before, and others not be increased and strengthened by corresponding acts.

In this manner certainly, as philosophers say, also diseases of the mind grow up. For when you have once desired money, if reason be applied to lead to a perception of the evil, the desire is stopped, and the ruling faculty of our mind is restored to the original authority. But if you apply no means of cure, it no longer returns to the same state, but being again excited by the corresponding appearance, it is inflamed to desire quicker than before: and when this takes place continually, it is henceforth hardened and made callous, and the disease of the mind confirms the love of money. For he who has had a fever, and has been relieved from it, is not in the same state that he was before, unless he has been completely cured. Something of the kind happens also in diseases of the soul. Certain traces and blisters are left in it, and unless a man shall completely efface them, when he is again lashed on the same places, the lash will produce not blisters but sores. If then you wish not to be of an angry temper, do not feed the habit: throw nothing on it which will increase it: at first keep quiet, and count the days on which you have not been angry. 'I used to get angry every day; now every second day; then every third, then every fourth. But if you have intermitted thirty days, make a sacrifice to God. For the habit at first begins to be weakened, and then is completely destroyed.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.18.1-13

Deep Dive: Master Your Emotions

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 10:37

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is brought and revealed unto you in Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all of your ways; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1 Peter 1:13-16

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

1 Corinthians 13:11

The evil is that the soul of every man, when it is greatly pleased or pained by anything, is compelled to believe that the object which caused the emotion is very distinct and very true; but it is not.

Socrates, Phaedo 83c

It would be absurd for me to be annoyed at casual abuse.

Cleanthes, Lives of the Eminent Philosophers 7.5

And yet would not anyone admit how much better it is, in place of exerting oneself to win someone else's wife, to exert oneself to discipline one's desires; in place of enduring hardships for the sake of money, to train oneself to want little; instead of giving oneself trouble about getting notoriety, to give oneself trouble how not to thirst for notoriety; instead of trying to find a way to injure an envied person, to inquire how not to envy anyone; and instead of slaving, as sycophants do, to win false friends, to undergo suffering in order to possess true friends?

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 7

Just as the same chain fastens the prisoner and the soldier who guards him, so hope and fear, dissimilar as they are, keep step together; fear follows hope. I am not surprised that they proceed in this way; each alike belongs to a mind that is in suspense, a mind that is fretted by looking forward to the future. But the chief cause of both these ills is that we do not adapt ourselves to the present, but send our thoughts a long way ahead. And so foresight, the noblest blessing of the human race, becomes perverted. Beasts avoid the dangers which they see, and when they have escaped them are free from care; but we men torment ourselves over that which is to come as well as over that which is past. Many of our blessings bring bane to us; for memory recalls the tortures of fear, while foresight anticipates them. The present alone can make no man wretched.

Seneca, Moral Letters 5

We think that we hold desires in our grasp, but they hold us in theirs.
Seneca, Moral Letters 8

I would not have you sorrow more than is fitting. That you should not mourn at all I shall hardly dare to insist... We, however, may be forgiven for bursting into tears, if only our tears have not flowed to excess, and if we have checked them by our own efforts. Let not the eyes be dry when we have lost a friend, nor let them overflow. We may weep, but we must not wail. ... Let us see to it that the recollection of those whom we have lost becomes a pleasant memory to us. ... To me, the thought of my dead friends is sweet and appealing. For I have had them as if I should one day lose them; I have lost them as if I have them still. ... Let us greedily enjoy our friends, because we do not know how long this privilege will be ours.
Seneca, Moral Letters 63

Suppose that you hold wealth to be a good: poverty will then distress you, and - which is most pitiable - it will be an imaginary poverty. For you may be rich, and nevertheless, because your neighbor is richer, you suppose yourself to be poor exactly by the same amount in which you fall short of your neighbor. You may deem official position a good: you will be vexed at another's appointment or re-appointment to the consulship; you will be jealous whenever you see a name several times in the state records. Your ambition will be so frenzied that you will regard yourself last in the race if there is anyone in front of you. Or you may rate death as the worst of evils, although there is really no evil therein except that which precedes death's coming - fear. You will be frightened out of your wits, not only by real, but by fancied dangers, and will be tossed forever on the sea of illusion...for peace itself will furnish further apprehension. Even in the midst of safety you will have no confidence if your mind has once been given a shock; once it has acquired the habit of blind panic, it is incapable of providing even for its own safety. For it does not avoid danger, but runs away. Yet we are more exposed to danger when we turn our backs. You may judge it the most grievous of ills to lose any of those you love; while all the same this would be no less foolish than weeping because the trees which charm your eye and adorn your home lose their foliage. Regard everything that pleases you as if it were a flourishing plant; make the most of it while it is in leaf, for different plants at different seasons must fall and die. But just as the loss of leaves is a light thing, because they are born afresh, so it is with the loss of those whom you love and regard as the delight of your life; for they can be replaced even though they cannot be born afresh. "New friends, however, will not be the same." No, nor will you yourself remain the same; you change with every day and every hour. But in other men you more readily see what time plunders; in your own case the change is hidden, because it will not take place visibly. Others are snatched from sight; we ourselves are being stealthily filched away from ourselves. You will not think about any of these problems, nor will you apply remedies to these wounds. You will of your own volition be sowing a crop of trouble by alternate hoping and despairing. ... No restraint upon pleasure, no bridling of desire, no checking of bad temper, no crushing of the wild assaults of passion, no opportunity to rid the soul of evil.
Seneca, Moral Letters 104

Reflect on the things that goad man into destroying man: you will find that they are hope, envy, hatred, fear, and contempt.
Seneca, Moral Letters 105

After I have issued my prohibition against the desires, I shall still allow you to wish that you may do the same things fearlessly and with greater accuracy of judgment, and to feel even the pleasures more than before; and how can these pleasures help coming more readily to your call, if you are their lord rather than their slave! ... Who does not admit that all the emotions flow as it were from a certain natural source? We are endowed by Nature with an interest in our own well-being; but this very interest, when overindulged, becomes a vice. Nature has intermingled pleasure with necessary things—not in order that we should seek pleasure, but in order that the addition of pleasure may make the indispensable means of existence attractive to our eyes. Should it claim rights of its own, it becomes self-indulgence.

Seneca, Moral Letters 106

At this point, I know, you will confront me with that common complaint against the Stoics: “Your promises are too great, and your counsels too hard. We are mere puppets, unable to deny ourselves everything. We shall sorrow, but not to any great extent; we shall feel desires, but in moderation; we shall give way to anger, but we shall be appeased.” And do you know why we have not the power to attain this Stoic ideal? It is because we refuse to believe in our power. Nay, of a surety, there is something else which plays a part: it is because we are in love with our vices; we uphold them and prefer to make excuses for them rather than shake them off. We mortals have been endowed with sufficient strength by nature, if only we use this strength, if only we concentrate our powers and rouse them all to help us or at least not to hinder us. The reason is unwillingness, the excuse, inability.

Seneca, Moral Letters 106

Remember that desire contains in it the hope of obtaining that which you desire; and the hope in aversion is that you will not fall into that which you attempt to avoid: and he who fails in his desire is unfortunate; and he who falls into that which he would avoid, is unhappy. If then you attempt to avoid only the things contrary to nature which are within your power, you will not be involved in any of the things which you would avoid. But if you attempt to avoid disease or death or poverty, you will be unhappy. Take away then aversion from all things which are not in our power, and transfer it to the things contrary to nature which are in our power.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 2

Men are disturbed not by the things which happen, but by their judgments about those things. For example, death is nothing terrible, for if it were, it would have seemed so to Socrates. For the judgment about death, that it is terrible, is the terrible thing. When then we are impeded or disturbed or grieved, let us never blame others, but ourselves, that is, our judgments.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 5a

When you see a person weeping in sorrow either when a child goes abroad or when he is dead, or when the man has lost his property, take care that the impression do not hurry you away with it, as if he were suffering in external things. But straightway make a distinction in your own mind, and be in readiness to say, it is not that which has happened that afflicts this man, for it does not afflict another, but it is the judgment about this thing which afflicts the man. So far as words then do not be unwilling to show him sympathy, and even if it happens so, to lament with him. But take care that you do not lament internally also.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 16

Remember that it is not he who reviles you or strikes you, who insults you, but it is your judgment about these things as being insulting. When then a man irritates you, you must know that it is your own judgment which has irritated you. Therefore especially try not to be carried away by the impression. For if you once gain time and delay, you will more easily master yourself.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 20

If any person was intending to put your body in the power of any man whom you fell in with on the way, you would be vexed: but that you put your understanding in the power of any man whom you meet, so that if he should revile you, it is disturbed and troubled, are you not ashamed at this?

Epictetus, Enchiridion 28

If you have received the impression of any pleasure, guard yourself against being carried away by it; but let the thing wait for you, and allow yourself a certain delay on your own part. Then think of both times, of the time when you will enjoy the pleasure, and of the time after the enjoyment of the pleasure when you will repent and will reproach yourself. And set against these things how you will rejoice if you have abstained from the pleasure, and how you will commend yourself. But if it seem to you seasonable to undertake the thing, take care that the charm of it, and the pleasure, and the attraction of it shall not conquer you: but set on the other side the consideration how much better it is to be conscious that you have gained this victory.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 34

It is a man's own judgments which disturb him.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.19.8

For this reason also it is ridiculous to say, 'tell me what to do.' What should I suggest to you? 'Well, form my mind so as to accommodate itself to any event.' ... If circumstances require something else, what will you say, or what will you do? Remember then this general precept and you will need no suggestion. If you yearn after externals, you must of necessity ramble up and down in obedience to the will of your master. And who is the master? He who has the power over the things which you seek to gain or try to avoid.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.2.21,24-26

When I see a man anxious, I say: What does this man want? If he did not want something which is not in his power, how could he be anxious?

For this reason a lute player when he is singing by himself has no anxiety, but when he enters the theatre, he is anxious even if he has a good voice and plays well on the lute; for he not only wishes to sing well, but also to obtain applause: but this is not in his power. Accordingly, where he has skill, there he has confidence. Bring any single person who knows nothing of music, and the musician does not care for him. But in the matter where a man knows nothing and has not been practiced, there he is anxious. What matter is this? He knows not what a crowd is or what the praise of a crowd is. However he has learned to strike the lowest chord and the highest; but what the praise of the many is, and what power it has in life he neither knows nor has he thought about it. Hence he must of necessity tremble and grow pale. I cannot then say that a man is not a lute player when I see him afraid, but I can say something else, and not one thing, but many. And first of all I call him a stranger and say: This man does not know in what part of the world he is, but though he has

been here so long, he is ignorant of the laws of the State and the customs, and what is permitted and what is not; and he has never employed any lawyer to tell him and to explain the laws. But a man does not write a will, if he does not know how it ought to be written, or he employs a person who does know; nor does he rashly seal a bond or write a security. But he uses his desire without a lawyer's advice, and aversion, and pursuit, and attempt and purpose. 'How do you mean without a lawyer?' He does not know that he wills what is not allowed, and does not will that which is of necessity; and he does not know either what is his own or what is another man's; but if he did know, he would never be impeded, he would never be hindered, he would not be anxious. 'How so?' Is any man then afraid about things which are not evils? No. Is he afraid about things which are evils, but still so far within his power that they may not happen? Certainly he is not. If then the things which are independent of the will are neither good nor bad, and all things which do depend on the will are within our power, and no man can either take them from us or give them to us, if we do not choose, where is room left for anxiety? But we are anxious about our poor body, our little property, about the will of Caesar; but not anxious about things internal. Are we anxious about not forming a false opinion? No, for this is in my power. About not exerting our movements contrary to nature? No, not even about this. When then you see a man pale, as the physician says, judging from the complexion, this man's spleen is disordered, that man's liver; so also say, this man's desire and aversion are disordered, he is not in the right way, he is in a fever. For nothing else changes the color, or causes trembling or chattering of the teeth, or causes a man to 'sink in his knees and shift from foot to foot.'

For this reason when Zeno was going to meet King Antigonus, he was not anxious, for Antigonus had no power over any of the things which Zeno admired; and Zeno did not care for those things over which Antigonus had power. But Antigonus was anxious when he was going to meet Zeno, for he wished to please Zeno; but this was an external thing out of his power. But Zeno did not want to please Antigonus; for no man who is skilled in any art wishes to please one who has no such skill.

Should I try to please you? Why? I suppose you know the measure by which one man is estimated by another. Have you taken pains to learn what is a good man and what is a bad man, and how a man becomes one or the other? Why then are you not good yourself? 'How,' he replies, 'am I not good?' Because no good man laments or groans or weeps, no good man is pale and trembles, or says, 'How will he receive me, how will he listen to me?' He'll receive you, slave, just as it pleases him. Why do you care about what belongs to others? Is it now his fault if he receives badly what proceeds from you? 'Certainly.' And is it possible that a fault should be one man's, and the evil in another? 'No.' Why then are you anxious about that which belongs to others?

Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 2.13.1-18

When the rhetorician knows that he has written well, that he has committed to memory what he has written, and brings an agreeable voice, why is he still anxious? Because he is not satisfied with having studied. What then does he want? To be praised by the audience? For the purpose then of being able to practice declamation he has been disciplined; but with respect to praise and blame he has not been disciplined. For when did he hear from anyone what praise is, what blame is, what the nature of each is, what kind of praise should be sought, or what kind of blame should be shunned? And when did he practice this discipline which follows these things? Why then do you still wonder, if in the matters which a man has learned, there he surpasses others, and in those in which he has not been disciplined, there he is the same with the many. So the lute player knows how to play, sings well, and has a fine dress, and yet he trembles when he enters on the stage; for these matters he understands, but he does not know what a crowd is, nor the shouts of a crowd, nor what ridicule is. Neither does he know what anxiety is, whether it is our work or the work of another,

whether it is possible to stop it or not. For this reason if he has been praised, he leaves the theatre puffed up, but if he has been ridiculed, the swollen bladder has been punctured and subsides.

This is the case also with ourselves. What do we admire? Externals. About what things are we busy? Externals. And have we any doubt then why we fear or why we are anxious? What then happens when we think the things which are coming on us to be evils? It is not in our power not to be afraid, it is not in our power not to be anxious. Then we say, 'Lord God, how shall I not be anxious?' Fool, have you not hands, did not God make them for you? Sit down now and pray that your nose may not run. Wipe yourself rather and do not blame him. Well then, has he given to you nothing in the present case? Has he not given to you endurance? Has he not given to you magnanimity? Has he not given to you manliness? When you have such hands, do you still look for one who shall wipe your nose?

But we neither study these things nor care for them. Give me a man who cares how he shall do anything, not for the obtaining of a thing, but who cares about his own energy. What man, when he is walking about, cares for his own energy? Who, when he is deliberating, cares about his own deliberation, and not about obtaining that about which he deliberates? And if he succeeds, he is elated and says, 'How well we have deliberated; did I not tell you, brother, that it is impossible, when we have thought about anything, that it should not turn out thus?' But if the thing should turn out otherwise, the wretched man is humbled; he knows not even what to say about what has taken place. ...

Why then are we still surprised, if we are well practiced in thinking about matters, but in our acts are low, without decency, worthless, cowardly, impatient of labor, altogether bad? For we do not care about these things nor do we study them. But if we had feared not death or banishment, but fear itself, we should have studied not to fall into those things which appear to us evils. Now in the school we are irritable and wordy; and if any little question arises about any of these things, we are able to examine them fully. But drag us to practice, and you will find us miserably shipwrecked. Let some disturbing appearance come on us, and you will know what we have been studying and in what we have been exercising ourselves. Consequently through want of discipline we are always adding something to the appearance and representing things to be greater than what they are. For instance as to myself, when I am on a voyage and look down on the deep sea, or look round on it and see no land, I am out of my mind and imagine that I must drink up all this water if I am wrecked, and it does not occur to me that three pints are enough. What then disturbs me? The sea? No, but my judgment. Again, when an earthquake shall happen, I imagine that the city is going to fall on me; but is not one little stone enough to knock my brains out?

What then are the things which are heavy on us and disturb us? What else than judgments? What else than judgment lies heavy upon him who goes away and leaves his companions and friends and places and habits of life? Now little children, for instance, when they cry on the nurse leaving them for a short time, forget their sorrow if they receive a small cake. Do you choose then that we should compare you to little children? No, by Zeus, for I do not wish to be pacified by a small cake, but by right judgment. And what are these? Such as a man ought to study all day... and when a thing is taken away, to give it up readily and immediately, and to be thankful for the time that you have had the use of it, if you would not cry for your nurse and mommy. ... See how tragedy is made when common things happen to silly men. ...

Will you not be weaned now, like children, and take more solid food, and not cry after mommies and nurses? ... My man, as the proverb says, make a desperate effort on behalf of tranquillity of mind, freedom, and magnanimity.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.16.5-41

Do you now desire that which is possible and that which is possible to you? Why then are you hindered? Why are you unhappy? Do you not now try to avoid the unavoidable? Why then do you fall in with anything which you would avoid? Why are you unfortunate? Why, when you desire a thing, does it not happen, and, when you do not desire it, does it happen? For this is the greatest proof of unhappiness and misery: 'I wish for something, and it does not happen. And what is more wretched than I?'

It was because she could not endure this that Medea came to murder her children: an act of a noble spirit in this view at least, for she had a just opinion what it is for a thing not to succeed which a person wishes. Then she says, 'Thus I shall be avenged on my husband Jason who has wronged and insulted me. And what shall I gain if he is punished thus? How then shall it be done? I shall kill my children, but I shall punish myself also: and what do I care?' This is the aberration of soul which possesses great energy. For she did not know wherein lies the doing of that which we wish; that you cannot get this from without, nor yet by the alteration and new adaptation of things. Do not desire the man (Jason, Medea's husband), and nothing which you desire will fail to happen. Do not obstinately desire that he shall live with you, do not desire to remain in Corinth, and in a word desire nothing than that which God wills. And who shall hinder you? Who shall compel you? No man shall compel you any more than he shall compel Zeus.

When you have such a guide and your wishes and desires are the same as his, why do you still fear disappointment? Give up your desire to wealth and your aversion to poverty, and you will be disappointed in the one, you will fall into the other. Well give them up to health, and you will be unfortunate: give them up to magistracies, honors, country, friends, children, in a word to any of the things which are not in man's power, and you will be unfortunate. But give them up to Zeus and to the rest of the gods; surrender them to the gods, let the gods govern, let your desire and aversion be ranged on the side of the gods, and wherein will you be any longer unhappy? But if, lazy wretch, you envy, and complain, and are jealous, and fear, and never cease for a single day complaining both of yourself and of the gods, why do you still speak of being educated? What kind of an education, man? Do you mean that you have been employed about sophistical syllogisms? Will you not, if it is possible, unlearn all these things and begin from the beginning, and see at the same time that hitherto you have not even touched on philosophy?

Epictetus, Discourses 2.17.17-27

By placing an object on the other side you will conquer the impression: you will not be drawn away by it. But in the first place, be not hurried away by the rapidity of the impression, but say, 'Impression, wait for me a little: let me see who you are, and what you are about: let me put you to the test.' And then do not allow the impression to lead you on and draw lively pictures of the things which will follow; for if you do, it will carry you off wherever it pleases. But rather bring in to oppose it some other beautiful and noble impression and cast out this base impression.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.18.23-25

If you ask me what then is the most excellent of all things, what must I say? I can only say the power of the will, when it is right. For it is this which makes use of all the other faculties both small and great. For when this faculty of the will is set right, a man who is not good becomes good: but when it fails, a man becomes bad. It is through this that we are unfortunate, that we are fortunate, that we blame one another, are pleased with one another. In a word, it is this which if we neglect it makes unhappiness, and if we carefully look after it, makes happiness.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.23.27

There are certain penalties fixed as by law for those who disobey the divine administration. 'Whoever thinks any other thing to be good except those things which depend on the will, let him envy, let him desire, let him flatter, let him be perturbed; whoever considers anything else to be evil, let him grieve, let him lament, let him weep, let him be unhappy.' And yet, though so severely punished, we cannot desist.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.11.1-3

The first difference between a common person and a philosopher is this: the common person says, 'Woe to me because of my little child, my brother, my father.' The philosopher, if he shall ever be compelled to say, 'Woe to me,' stops and says, 'because of myself.' For nothing which is independent of the will can hinder or damage the will, and the will can only hinder or damage itself. If then we ourselves incline in this direction, so as, when we are unlucky, to blame ourselves and to remember that nothing else is the cause of perturbation or loss of tranquillity except our own judgment, I swear to you by all the gods that we have made progress. But in the present state of affairs we have gone another way from the beginning. For example, while we were still children, the nurse, if we ever stumbled through want of care, did not chide us, but would beat the stone. But what did the stone do? Ought the stone to have moved on account of your child's folly? Again, if we find nothing to eat on coming out of the bath, the pedagogue never checks our appetite, but he flogs the cook. Man, did we make you the pedagogue of the cook and not of the child? Correct the child; improve him. In this way even when we are grown up we are like children. For he who is unmusical is a child in music; he who is without letters is a child in learning; he who is uneducated, is a child in life.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.19.1-6

You must not blame God or man; you must take away desire altogether, you must transfer avoidance only to the things which are within the power of the will; you must not feel anger nor resentment nor envy nor pity.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.22.13

In the first place then you must make your ruling faculty pure, and this mode of life also: you should say 'Now, to me the matter to work on is my understanding, as wood is to the carpenter, as hides to the shoemaker; and my business is the right use of impressions.'

Epictetus, Discourses 3.22.19-20

Where there are perturbations, and griefs, and fears, and desires not satisfied, and aversions of things which you cannot avoid, and envies, and jealousies, how is there a road to happiness there? But where there are corrupt principles, there these things must of necessity be.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.22.61

It is never possible for happiness and desire of what is not present to come together. For that which is happy must have all that it desires, must resemble a person who is filled with food, and must have neither thirst nor hunger.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.24.17

Then, when your imagination pains you, for it is not in your power to prevent this, contend against it by the aid of reason, conquer it: do not allow it to gain strength nor to lead you to the consequences by raising

images such as it pleases and as it pleases.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.24.108

Have you also been accustomed while you were studying philosophy to look to others and to hope for nothing from yourself? Lament then and groan and eat with fear that you may not have food tomorrow. Tremble about your poor servants lest they steal, lest they run away, lest they die. So live, and continue to live, you who in name only have approached philosophy, and have disgraced its theorems as far as you can by showing them to be useless and unprofitable to those who take them up; you who have never sought constancy, freedom from perturbation, and from passions. ... Ought you not to demonstrate those things which make men happy, which make things go on for them in the way as they wish, and why we ought to blame no man, accuse no man, and acquiesce in the administration of the universe? Show me these.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.26.11-18

'Must I then not desire health?' By no means, nor anything else that belongs to another: for what is not in your power to acquire or to keep when you please, this belongs to another. Keep then far from it not only your hands, but more than that, even your desires. If you do not, you have surrendered yourself as a slave; you have subjected your neck, if you admire anything not your own, to everything that is dependent on the power of others and perishable, to which you have conceived a liking. 'Is not my hand my own?' It is a part of your own body; but it is by nature earth, subject to hindrance, compulsion, and the slave of everything which is stronger. And why do I say your hand? You ought to possess your whole body as a poor donkey, loaded, as long as it is possible, as long as you are allowed. But if there be a press, and a soldier should lay hold of it, let it go, do not resist, nor murmur; if you do, you will receive blows, and nevertheless you will also lose the donkey. But when you ought to feel thus with respect to the body, consider what remains to be done about all the rest which is provided for the sake of the body. When the body is a donkey, all the other things are bits belonging to the donkey: packsaddles, shoes, barley, fodder. Let these also go: get rid of them quicker and more readily than of the donkey.

When you have made this preparation, and have practiced this discipline—to distinguish that which belongs to another from that which is your own, the things which are subject to hindrance from those which are not, to consider the things free from hindrance to concern yourself, and those which are not free not to concern yourself, to keep your desire steadily fixed to the things which do concern yourself, and turned from the things which do not concern yourself—do you still fear any man? No one. For about what will you be afraid? About the things which are your own, in which consists the nature of good and evil? And who has power over these things? Who can take them away? Who can impede them? No man can, no more than he can impede God.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.76-82

Do not attach yourself to external things and they will not be necessary: do not say to yourself that they are necessary, and then they are not necessary. This study you ought to practice from morning to evening, beginning with the smallest things and those most liable to damage: with an earthen pot, with a cup. Then proceed in this way to a tunic, to a little dog, to a horse, to a small estate in land; then to yourself, to your body, to the parts of your body, to your children, to your wife, to your brothers. Look all round and throw these things which are not yours from you. Purge your judgments, so that nothing cleave to you of the things which are not your own, that nothing grow to you, that nothing give you pain when it is torn from you; and

say, while you are daily exercising yourself as you do there, not that you are philosophizing, for this is an arrogant expression, but that you are presenting an asserter of freedom: for this is really freedom.
Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.110-113

How then have you not yet convinced yourself to get an education? At present are not things upside down? Is this what you have been earnest about doing, to learn to be free from grief and free from disturbance, and not to be humiliated, and to be free? Have you not heard then that there is only one way which leads to this end: to give up desiring the things which do not depend on the will, to withdraw from them, and to admit that they belong to others? For another man then to have an opinion about you, of what kind is it? It is a thing independent of the will. Then is it nothing to you? It is nothing. When then you are still vexed at this and disturbed, do you think that you are convinced about good and evil? ... But the necessary theorems by proceeding from which a man can become free from grief, fear, passions, hindrance, and a free man, these you do not exercise yourself in nor do you practice in these the proper practice.
Epictetus, Discourses 4.6.8-10,16

The first then and highest purity is that which is in the soul; and we say the same of impurity. Now you could not discover the impurity of the soul as you could discover that of the body: but as to the soul, what else could you find in it than that which makes it filthy in respect to the acts which are her own? Now the acts of the soul are movement towards an object or movement from it, desire, aversion, preparation, purpose, assent. What then is it which in these acts makes the soul filthy and impure? Nothing else than her own bad judgments. Consequently the impurity of the soul is the soul's bad judgments; and the purification of the soul is the planting in it of proper judgments; and the soul is pure which has proper judgments, for the soul alone in her own acts is free from perturbation and pollution.
Epictetus, Discourses 4.11.5-8

Those who are well constituted in the body endure both heat and cold: and so those who are well constituted in the soul endure both anger and grief and excessive joy and the other passions.
Epictetus, Fragment 18

Nothing is more wretched than the man who goes round and round everything, and, as Pindar says, 'searches the bowels of the earth', and seeks by conjecture to sound the minds of his neighbours, but fails to perceive that it is enough to abide with the Divinity that is within himself and to do Him genuine service. Now that service is to keep Him unsullied by passion, trifling, and discontent with what comes from God or men. What comes from the Gods is to be revered because of excellence; what comes from men is dear because they are of one kindred with himself; pitiful too sometimes, humanly speaking, by reason of their ignorance of good and ill. This disablement is more grievous than that which robs the eyes of the power to distinguish light from darkness.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 2.13

Don't regard things in the light in which he who does the wrong judges them, nor as he wishes you to judge them: but see them as in truth they are.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.11

Your evil does not consist in another's governing principle, nor indeed in any change and alteration of your environment. Where then? Where the part of you which judges about evil is. Let it not frame the judgement, and all is well. Even if what is nearest to it, your body, is cut, cauterized, suppurates, mortifies, still let the part which judges about these things be at rest; that is, let it decide that nothing is good or evil which can happen indifferently to the evil man and the good. For what happens indifferently to one whose life is contrary to Nature and to one whose life is according to Nature, this is neither according to nor contrary to Nature.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.39

Should you propose to yourself as good or evil something beyond your will, the necessary result is that, if you fall into that evil or fail of that good, you blame the gods and you hate men who are or who you suspect will be the causes of your loss of the good or your falling into the evil; and indeed we commit many wrongs from concern in regard to these things, If, however, we decide that only what our will controls is good or evil, then no ground is left either to arraign God or to adopt the position of an enemy to man.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.41

It is possible to entertain no thought about this, and not to be troubled in spirit; for things of themselves are not so constituted as to create our judgements upon them.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.52

Let what will from outside happen to what can be affected by this happening, for the parts which are affected shall, if they please, find fault; whereas I myself, unless I conceive the accident to be evil, am not yet harmed; and it is in my power not to conceive it to be evil.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.14

Do not allow the imagination of the whole of your life to confuse you, do not dwell upon all the manifold troubles which have come to pass and will come to pass, but ask yourself in regard to every present piece of work: what is there here that can't be borne and can't be endured? You will be ashamed to make the confession. Then remind yourself that it is not the future or the past that weighs heavy upon you, but always the present, and that this gradually grows less, if only you isolate it and reprove your understanding, if that is not strong enough to hold out against it, thus taken by itself.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 8:36

In your angry fits have the maxim ready that it is not passion that is manly, but that what is kind and gentle as it is more human so is it more manly, and that this is the character which has strength and sinews and fortitude, not that which is indignant and displeased; for as this is nearer to imperturbability so it is nearer to power; and as grief is a mark of weakness, so also is anger, for both have been wounded and have surrendered to the wound.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 11.18.10

Deep Dive: Integrity Is Invincible

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:37-39

Even though our outward man perishes, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ... The things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. ... Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

James 1:13-16,19-20

The soul is more powerful than any sort of fate; by its own agency it guides its affairs in either direction, and of its own power it can produce a happy life or a wretched one.

Seneca, Moral Letters 98

You can be invincible, if you enter into no contest in which it is not in your power to conquer.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 19a

What has a natural power of hindering the will? Nothing which is independent of the will; but only the will itself, when it is perverted. Therefore, the will alone is vicious or virtuous.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.23.19

The good man is invincible, for he does not enter the contest where he is not stronger. If you want to have his land and all that is on it, take the land; take his servants, take his magisterial office, take his poor body. But you will not make his desire fail in that which it seeks, nor his aversion fall into that which he would avoid. The only contest into which he enters is that about things which are within the power of his will; how then will he not be invincible?

Epictetus, Discourses 3.6.5-7

If then pleasure is not able to subdue a man, nor pain, nor fame, nor wealth, but he is able, when he chooses, to spit out all his poor body in a man's face and depart from life, whose slave can he still be?

Epictetus, Discourses 3.24.71

Then do we not choose to make secure the only means of safety which are offered to us? And do we not choose to withdraw ourselves from that which is perishable and servile and to labor at the things which are imperishable and by nature free? And do we not remember that no man either hurts another or does good to another, but that a man's opinion about each thing, is that which hurts him, is that which overturns him?
Epictetus, Discourses 4.5.28

A man so minded, putting off no longer to be one of the elect, is surely a priest and minister of gods, employing aright that which is seated within him, which makes the mere mortal to be unstained by pleasures, unscathed by any pain, untouched by any wrong, unconscious of any wickedness; a wrestler in the greatest contest of all, not to be overthrown by any passion; dyed with justice to the core, welcoming with his whole heart all that comes to pass and is assigned to him; seldom and only under some great necessity and for the common good imagining what another person is saying or doing or thinking. For he has only his own work to realize and he keeps in mind continually what is assigned to him from the Whole;—his work he makes perfect, his lot he is convinced is good.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 3.4.3

Remember that the governing self becomes invincible when it withdraws into itself and is satisfied with itself, doing nothing which it does not will to do, even if its opposition is unreasonable. How much more then when it decides both with reason and circumspection about a given case? On this account the understanding free from passions is a citadel of refuge; for man has nothing stronger into which to retreat and be thereafter inexpugnable. He then who has not seen this is uninstructed; he who has seen it and does not retreat is unfortunate.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 8.48

Deep Dive: Philosophy Is Everybody's Business

And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Matthew 3:9

When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 8:10-12

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Matthew 28:19-20

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Mark 3:31-35

Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press. And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

Luke 8:19-21

They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.

Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father.

Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

John 8:33-58

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Acts 10:34-35

Whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. ... your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Ephesians 6:8-9

Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Colossians 3:9-11

If it appears that the male and the female sex have distinct qualifications for any arts or pursuits, we shall affirm that they ought to be assigned respectively to each. But if it appears that they differ only in just this respect that the female bears and the male begets, we shall say that no proof has yet been produced that the woman differs from the man for our purposes.

Socrates, Republic 454d-454e

Certain men are fitted with unusual qualities and reach without a long apprenticeship that which is ordinarily a matter of teaching, welcoming honorable things as soon as they hear them. Hence come the choice minds

which seize quickly upon virtue, or else produce it from within themselves. But your dull, sluggish fellow, who is hampered by his evil habits, must have this soul-rust incessantly rubbed off. Now, as the former sort, who are inclined towards the good, can be raised to the heights more quickly, so the weaker spirits will be assisted and freed from their evil opinions if we entrust to them the accepted principles of philosophy.

Seneca, Moral Letters 95

If you hear that in truth these men think the good to be only there, where will is, and where there is a right use of impressions, no longer trouble yourself whether they are father or son, or brothers, or have associated a long time and are companions, but when you have ascertained this only, confidently declare that they are friends, as you declare that they are faithful, that they are just. For where else is friendship than where there is fidelity, and modesty, where there is a communion of honest things and of nothing else?

Epictetus, Discourses 2.22.29

For he says, wWhat, I a slave, I whose father was free, whose mother was free? I whom no man can purchase? I am also of senatorial rank, and a friend of Caesar, and I have been a consul, and I own many slaves.' In the first place, most excellent senatorial man, perhaps your father also was a slave in the same kind of servitude, and your mother, and your grandfather, and all your ancestors in an ascending series. But even if they were as free as it is possible, what is this to you? What if they were of a noble nature, and you of a mean nature; if they were fearless, and you a coward; if they had the power of self-restraint, and you are not able to exercise it?

Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.8-10

Deep Dive: We're All In This Together

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

John 17:20-26

My kingdom is not of this world.

John 18:36

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: and those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 3:20

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

Hebrews 8:10-11

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

Hebrews 12:22-23

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 21:2

I too, Antiphon, having my tastes, even as another finds pleasure in his horse and his hounds, and another in his fighting cocks, so I too take my pleasure in good friends; and if I have any good thing myself I teach it them, or I commend them to others by whom I think they will be helped forwards on the path of virtue. The treasures also of the wise of old, written and bequeathed in their books, I unfold and peruse in common with my friends. If our eye light upon any good thing we cull it eagerly, and regard it as great gain if we may but grow in friendship with one another.

Socrates, Memorabilia 1.6

And yet what thing else may a man call his own is comparable to this one best possession! What rather will not serve by contrast to enhance the value of an honest friend! ... Consider what the post is that he assigns himself! To meet and supplement what is lacking to the welfare of his friends, to promote their private and their public interests, is his concern. Is there need of kindly action in any quarter? He will throw in the full weight of his support. Does some terror confound? He is at hand to help and defend by expenditure of money and of energy, by appeals to reason or resort to force. His the privilege alike to gladden the prosperous in the hour of success and to sustain their footing who have well-nigh slipped. All that the hands of a man may minister, all that the eyes of each are swift to see, the ears to hear, and the feet to compass, he with his helpful arts will not fall short of. Nay, not seldom that which a man has failed to accomplish for himself, has missed seeing or hearing or attaining, a friend acting in behalf of friend will achieve vicariously.

Socrates, Memorabilia 2.4

No good thing is pleasant to possess, without friends to share it.

Seneca, Moral Letters 6

As Hecato says: "I can show you a love potion, compounded without drugs, herbs, or any witch's incantation: If you would be loved, love."

Seneca, Moral Letters 9

It is in accordance with Nature to show affection for our friends, and to rejoice in their advancement as if it were absolutely our own. For if we have not done this, even virtue, which grows strong only through exercising our perceptions, will not abide with us.

Seneca, Moral Letters 109

Good men are mutually helpful; for each gives practice to the other's virtues and thus maintains wisdom at its proper level. Each needs someone with whom he may make comparisons and investigations. Skilled wrestlers are kept up to the mark by practice; a musician is stirred to action by one of equal proficiency. The wise man also needs to have his virtues kept in action; and as he prompts himself to do things, so is he prompted by another wise man. How can a wise man help another wise man? He can quicken his impulses, and point out to him opportunities for honorable action. Besides, he can develop some of his own ideas; he can impart what he has discovered. For even in the case of the wise man something will always remain to discover, something towards which his mind may make new ventures.

Seneca, Moral Letters 109

A good man will help another good man. How, you ask? Because he will bring joy to the other, he will strengthen his faith, and from the contemplation of their mutual tranquility the delight of both will be increased. Moreover they will communicate to each other a knowledge of certain facts; for the wise man is not all-knowing. And even if he were all-knowing, someone might be able to devise and point out short cuts, by which the whole matter is more readily disseminated. The wise will help the wise, not mark you, because of his own strength merely, but because of the strength of the man whom he assists. The latter, it is true, can by himself develop his own parts; nevertheless, even one who is running well is helped by one who cheers him on.

Seneca, Moral Letters 109

The wise man cannot maintain his mental standard without intercourse with friends of his own kind - with whom he may share his goodness. Moreover, there is a sort of mutual friendship among all the virtues. Thus, he who loves the virtues of certain among his peers, and in turn exhibits his own to be loved, is helpful. Like things give pleasure, especially when they are honorable and when men know that there is mutual approval. And besides, none but a wise man can prompt another wise man's soul in an intelligent way, just as man can be prompted in a rational way by man only.

Seneca, Moral Letters 109

Further, you are a citizen of the cosmos, and a part of it, not one of the subservient, but one of the principal ruling parts, for you are capable of comprehending the divine administration and of considering the connection of things. What then does the character of a citizen promise? To hold nothing as profitable to himself; to deliberate about nothing as if he were detached from the community, but to act as the hand or foot would do, if they had reason and understood the constitution of nature, for they would never put themselves in motion nor desire anything otherwise than with reference to the whole. ... the whole is superior to the part, and the city to the citizen.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.10.3-5

This is the result to those who have so arranged the work of philosophy... without uneasiness, without fear, without perturbation to pass through life themselves, together with their associates maintaining the relations both natural and acquired, as the relation of son, of father, of brother, of citizen, of man, of wife, of neighbour, of fellow traveller, of ruler, of ruled.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.14.8

Remember what the poet Homer says about the stranger:

Stranger, I must not, e'en if a worse man come,

Ill treat a stranger, for all come from Zeus,

Strangers and poor.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.11.4

'How then shall I become of an affectionate temper?' By being of a noble disposition, and happy. For it is not reasonable to be mean-spirited nor to lament yourself, nor to depend on another, nor ever to blame God or man. I entreat you, become an affectionate person in this way, by observing these rules. But if through this affection, as you name it, you are going to be a slave and wretched, there is no profit in being affectionate.

And what prevents you from loving another as a person subject to mortality, as one who may go away from you? Did not Socrates love his own children? He did; but it was as a free man, as one who remembered that he must first be a friend to the gods.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.24.58-60

We ought to remember who we are, and what is our name, and to endeavor to direct our duties towards the character of our several relationships in life in this manner: what is the season for singing, what is the season for play, and in whose presence? What will be the consequence of the act; whether our associates will despise us, whether we shall despise them; when to jeer, and whom to ridicule; and on what occasion to comply and with whom?

Epictetus, Discourses 4.12.16-17

Say to yourself in the early morning: I shall meet today inquisitive, ungrateful, violent, treacherous, envious, uncharitable men. All these things have come upon them through ignorance of real good and ill. But I, because I have seen that the nature of good is the right, and of ill the wrong, and that the nature of the man himself who does wrong is akin to my own (not of the same blood and seed, but partaking with me in mind, that is in a portion of divinity), I can neither be harmed by any of them, for no man will involve me in wrong, nor can I be angry with my kinsman or hate him; for we have come into the world to work together, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of upper and lower teeth. To work against one another therefore is to oppose Nature, and to be vexed with another or to turn away from him is to tend to antagonism.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 2.1

Reasonable creatures have come into the world for the sake of one another... the universe is a kind of commonwealth.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.3.2

If mind is common to us all, then also the reason, whereby we are reasoning beings, is common. If this be so, then also the reason which enjoins what is to be done or left undone is common. If this be so, law also is common; if this be so, we are citizens; if this be so, we are partakers in one constitution; if this be so, the universe is a kind of commonwealth. For in what other common government can we say that the whole race of men partakes? And thence, from this common City, is derived our mind itself, our reason and our sense of law, or from what else? For as the earthy is in me a portion from some earth, and the watery from a second element, and the vital spirit from some source, and the hot and fiery from yet another source of its own (for

nothing comes from nothing, just as nothing returns to nothing), so therefore the mind also has come from some source.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.4

Everything is fitting for me, my universe, which fits thy purpose. Nothing in thy good time is too early or too late for me; everything is fruit for me which thy seasons, Nature, bear; from thee, in thee, to thee are all things. The poet sings: 'Dear city of Cecrops' [founder of Athens], and will you not say: 'Dear city of God'?

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.23

Constantly think of the Universe as one living creature, embracing one being and one soul; how all is absorbed into the one consciousness of this living creature; how it compasses all things with a single purpose, and how all things work together to cause all that comes to pass, and their wonderful web and texture.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.40

Fellowship is the good of a reasonable creature. For it has been proved long ago that we are born for fellowship.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.16

How have you hitherto borne yourself to gods, parents, brother, wife, children, masters, tutors, friends, connections, servants? Has your relation to all men hitherto been: 'not to have wrought nor to have said a lawless thing to anyone'?

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.31

Rejoice and set up your rest in one thing: to pass from act to act of fellowship, keeping God in remembrance.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.7

Meditate often upon the bond of all in the universe and their mutual relationship. For all things are in a way woven together and all are because of this dear to one another; for these follow in order one upon another because of the stress-movement and common spirit and the unification of matter.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.38

Fit yourself into accord with the things in which your portion has been cast, and love the men among whom your lot has fallen, but love them truly.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.39

My city and my fatherland is Rome; as a man, the cosmos. All then that benefits these cities is alone my good.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.44.2

Whatever I do, by myself or with another, should contribute solely to this, the general benefit and harmony.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.5

Do not be ashamed to be helped; the task before you is to accomplish what falls to your lot, like a soldier in a storming-party. Suppose you are lame and cannot scale the wall by yourself, yet it can be done with another's

help.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.7

All things are woven together and the common bond is sacred, and scarcely one thing is foreign to another, for they have been arranged together in their places and together make the same ordered universe. For there is one universe out of all, one God through all, one substance and one law, one common reason of all intelligent creatures and one truth, if indeed the perfection of creatures of the same family and partaking of the same reason is one.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.9

Reasonable beings, constituted for one fellowship of cooperation, are in their separated bodies analogous to the several members of the body in individual organisms. The idea of this will come home to you more if you say to yourself: 'I am a member of the system made up of reasonable beings.' If, however, by the change of one letter, you call yourself a part, you do not yet love men from your heart; well-doing is not yet a joy to you for its own sake; you are still doing it as a bare duty, not yet as though doing good to yourself.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.13

Reasonable creatures exist for one another's sake. Thus the principal end in man's constitution is the social.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.55

When you are called from sleep with difficulty, revive the thought that to render social acts is according to your constitution and to human nature.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 8.12

At any rate there were found from the first among irrational creatures, hives, and flocks, care for nestlings, and what resembles love; for already there were vital spirits there, and in the higher part the tendency to union was found raised in degree, as it was not in plants or minerals or trees. Among reasonable creatures, constitutions, friendships, households, and gatherings were found, conventions too and armistices in war. Among the yet higher, even among beings in a sense separated, there subsisted a unity such as obtains among the stars. Thus progress towards the higher was able to produce a sympathy even in what are separated.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 9.9.2

Make haste to your own governing self, to that of the Whole, and that of this man. To your own, to make it a righteous mind; to that of the Whole, to remind yourself what it is of which you are a part; to this man's, that you may observe whether it is ignorance or design, and may reflect at the same time that his self is of one kind with your own.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations. 9.22

Deep Dive: We Owe Each Other Kindness

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:31-32

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8

When any person treats you ill or speaks ill of you, remember that he does this or says this because he thinks that it is what is right for him. It is not possible then for him to follow that which seems right to you, but that which seems right to himself. Accordingly if he is wrong in his opinion, he is the person who is hurt, for he is the person who has been deceived; for if a man shall suppose the true conjunction to be false, it is not the conjunction which is hindered, but the man who has been deceived about it. If you proceed then from this principle, you will be mild in temper to him who reviles you: for say on each occasion, 'It seemed right to him.'

Epictetus, Enchiridion 42

But if you go and blame your brother, I say to you: you have forgotten who you are and what is your name. In the next place, if you were a smith and made a wrong use of the hammer, you would have forgotten the smith you used to be. Qnd if you have forgotten the brother and instead of a brother have become an enemy, would you appear not to have changed one thing for another in that case? And if instead of a man, who is a tame animal and social, you are become a mischievous wild beast, treacherous, and biting, have you lost nothing? But is it only if you lose a bit of money that you suffer damage? And does the loss of nothing else do a man damage? If you had lost the art of grammar or music, would you think the loss of it a damage? And if you shall lose modesty, moderation, and gentleness, do you think the loss nothing? And yet the things first mentioned are lost by some cause external and independent of the will, and the second by our own fault; and as to the first neither to have them nor to lose them is shameful; but as to the second, not to have them and to lose them is shameful and matter of reproach and a misfortune.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.10.12-16

Habituate yourself not to be inattentive to what another has to say and, so far as possible, be in the mind of the speaker.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.53

It is a property of man to love even those who stumble. This feeling ensues if it occur to you at the time that men are your kindred and go wrong because of ignorance and against their will; that in a little while both of you will be dead; but, above all, that he did you no harm, for he did not make your governing self worse than it was before.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.22

When a man offends against you, think at once what conception of good or ill it was which made him offend. And, seeing this, you will pity him, and feel neither surprise nor anger. For you yourself still conceive either the same object as he does to be good, or something else of the same type; you are bound, therefore, to excuse him. If, on the other hand, you no longer conceive things of that kind to be goods or ills, you will the more easily be kind to one whose eye is darkened.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.26

'No soul is willing to be robbed of truth', says Plato. The same holds of justice, too, of temperance, of kindness, and the like. It is most necessary to remember this continually, for thus you will be more gentle to all men.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.63

When another blames or hates you or men express such sentiments, go to their inward selves, pass in and see what kind of men they are. You will see that you ought not to torment yourself in order that they may hold some opinion about you. You must, however, be well disposed to them; for in the natural order they are friends, and moreover the gods help them in a variety of ways, by dreams, by prophecy;—to get, however, the objects about which they are concerned.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 9.27

Just as those who oppose you as you progress in agreement with right principle will not be able to divert you from sound conduct, so do not let them force you to abandon your kindness towards them; but be equally on your guard in both respects, in steady judgement and behaviour as well as in gentleness towards those who try to hinder you or are difficult in other ways. For to be hard upon them is a weakness just as much as to abandon your course and to give in, from fright; for both are equally deserters from their post, the man who is in a panic as well as the man who is alienated from his natural kinsman and friend.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 11.9

Gentleness is invincible, if it be genuine and not sneering or hypocritical. For what can the most insolent do to you, if you continue gentle to him, and, if opportunity allows, mildly admonish him and quietly show him a better way at the very moment when he attempts to do you injury: 'No, my child; we came into the world for other ends. It is not I that am harmed, but you are harmed, my child.' And point out with tact and on general grounds that this is so, that not even bees act like that nor the many creatures that are by nature gregarious. But you must not do it ironically or as if finding fault, but affectionately and not feeling the sting in your soul, nor as if you were lecturing him or desired some bystander to admire you, but even if others are present, just in the way you would address him if you were alone.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 11.18.9

Deep Dive: Only Seekers Find

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

Matthew 11:25

Remember Lot's wife.

Luke 17:32

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:1-8

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:28-33

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

Let all your work, therefore, have some purpose, and keep some object in view.

Seneca, On Tranquility of Mind 12

In every act observe the things which come first, and those which follow it; and then proceed to the act. If you do not, at first you will approach it with alacrity, without having thought of the things which will follow; but afterwards, when certain ugly things have shown themselves, you will be ashamed. ... Observe both the things which come first, and the things which follow; and then begin the act. ... My man, first of all consider what kind of thing it is: and then examine your own nature, if you are able to sustain the character. ... You must pass sleepless nights, endure toil, go away from your kinsmen, be despised by a slave, in everything have

the inferior part, in honor, in office, in the courts of justice, in every little matter. Consider these things, if you would exchange for them, freedom from passions, liberty, tranquility. If not, take care that, like little children, you be not now a philosopher.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 29

Whatever rules are proposed to you for the conduct of life abide by them, as if they were laws, as if you would be guilty of impiety if you transgressed any of them. And whatever any man shall say about you, do not attend to it: for this is no affair of yours.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 50

It is not easy to exhort weak young men; for neither is it easy to hold soft cheese with a hook. But those who have a good natural disposition, even if you try to turn them aside, cling still more to reason. Wherefore Rufus generally attempted to discourage his pupils, and he used this method as a test of those who had a good natural disposition and those who had not. For it was his habit to say, 'as a stone, if you cast it upwards, will be brought down to the earth by its own nature, so the man whose mind is naturally good, the more you repel him, the more he turns towards that to which he is naturally inclined.'

Epictetus, Discourses 3.6.9-10

When did you ever make a voyage for the purpose of examining your own judgments, and casting them out, if you have any that are bad? ... What then? Does it need only a short time? And is it possible to seize it as you pass by?

Epictetus, Discourses 3.9.6,11

It is not possible to have your desire not disappointed and your aversion free from falling into that which you would avoid, without great and constant practice.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.12.5

Consider as to the things which you proposed to yourself at first, which you have secured, and which you have not; and how you are pleased when you recall to memory the one, and are pained about the other; and if it is possible, recover the things wherein you failed. For we must not shrink when we are engaged in the greatest combat, but we must even take blows. For the combat before us is not in wrestling and the Pancration, in which both the successful and the unsuccessful may have the greatest merit, or may have little, and in truth may be very fortunate or very unfortunate; but the combat is for good fortune and happiness themselves. Well then, even if we have renounced the contest in this matter, no man hinders us from renewing the combat again, and we are not compelled to wait for another four years that the games at Olympia may come again; but as soon as you have recovered and restored yourself, and employ the same zeal, you may renew the combat again; and if again you renounce it, you may again renew it; and if you once gain the victory, you are like him who has never renounced the combat.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.25.1-4

When circumstances force you to some sort of distress, quickly return to yourself. Do not stay out of rhythm for longer than you must: you will master the harmony the more by constantly going back to it.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.11

Deep Dive: Actions Outshine Words

Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Matthew 12:33-37

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Luke 7:46

Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 7:16-17

My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

Luke 8:21

If ye love me, keep my commandments. ... He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. ... If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 14:15,21,23

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

John 15:14

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

James 1:22-25

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:17

Philosophy is no trick to catch the public; it is not devised for show. It is a matter, not of words, but of facts. It is not pursued in order that the day may yield some amusement before it is spent, or that our leisure may be

relieved of a tedium that irks us. It molds and constructs the soul; it orders our life, guides our conduct, shows us what we should do and what we should leave undone; it sits at the helm and directs our course as we waver amid uncertainties.

Seneca, Moral Letters 16

All the words that these men utter and juggle before a listening crowd belong to others. They have been spoken by Plato, spoken by Zeno, spoken by Chrysippus or by Posidonius, and by a whole host of Stoics as numerous as excellent. I shall show you how men can prove their words to be their own: it is by doing what they have been talking about.

Seneca, Moral Letters 108

Our minds are accustomed to entertain rather than to cure themselves, to make an aesthetic pleasure out of philosophy, when philosophy should really be a remedy. ... Why then do you occupy me with the words rather than with the works of wisdom? Make me braver, make me calmer, make me the equal of Fortune, make me her superior. And I can be her superior, if I apply to this end everything that I learn.

Seneca, Moral Letters 117

How, now, in view of these conclusions, could knowledge of the theory of anything be better than becoming accustomed to act according to the principles of the theory, if we understand that application enables one to act, but theory makes one capable of speaking about it? Theory which teaches how one should act is related to application, and comes first, since it is not possible to do anything really well unless its practical execution be in harmony with theory. In effectiveness, however, practice takes precedence over theory as being more influential in leading men to action.

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 5

Therefore upon the learning of the lessons appropriate to each and every excellence, practical training must follow invariably, if indeed from the lessons we have learned we hope to derive any benefit.

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 6

On no occasion call yourself a philosopher, and do not speak much among the uninstructed about theorems: but do that which follows from them. ... For even sheep do not vomit up their grass and show to the shepherds how much they have eaten; but when they have internally digested the pasture, they produce externally wool and milk. Do you also show not your theorems to the uninstructed, but show the acts which come from their digestion.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 46

When a man is proud because he can understand and explain the writings of Chrysippus, say to yourself, 'If Chrysippus had not written obscurely, this man would have had nothing to be proud of.'

But what is it that I wish? To understand Nature and to follow it. I inquire therefore who is the interpreter: and when I have heard that it is Chrysippus, I come to him. But I do not understand what is written, and therefore I seek another interpreter. And so far there is yet nothing to be proud of. But when I shall have found a good interpreter, the thing that remains is to use the precepts. This itself is the only thing to be proud of. But if I shall admire the exposition, what else have I been made unless a grammarian instead of a

philosopher? Except in one thing, that I am explaining Chrysippus instead of Homer.
When then any man says to me, 'Read Chrysippus to me', I rather blush, when I cannot show my acts like to and consistent with his words.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 49

If you did not learn these things in order to show them in practice, why did you learn them? ... For it is not these small arguments that are wanted now: the writings of the Stoics are full of them. What then is the thing which is wanted? A man who shall apply them, one who by his acts shall bear testimony to his words.

Assume, I entreat you, this character, that we may no longer use in the schools the examples of the ancients, but may have some example of our own.

Epictetus, Discourses, 1.29.35,56-57

For this reason philosophers admonish us not to be satisfied with learning only, but also to add study, and then practice. ... If then we shall not also put in practice right opinions, we shall be nothing more than the expositors of the opinions of others. ... Philosopher, where are the things which you were talking about? Whence did you produce and utter them? From the lips, and thence only. Why then do you corrupt the aids provided by others?

Epictetus, Discourses 2.9.13-17

Show us some change in your ruling faculty, as athletes show in their shoulders by what they have been exercised and what they have eaten; as those who have taken up certain arts show by what they have learned. The carpenter does not come and say, 'Hear me talk about the carpenter's art,' but having undertaken to build a house, he makes it, and proves that he knows the art. You also ought to do something of the kind: eat like a man, drink like a man, dress, marry, beget children, do the office of a citizen, endure abuse, bear with an unreasonable brother, bear with your father, bear with your son, neighbour, companion. Show us these things that we may see that you have in truth learned something from the philosophers.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.21.3-6

A man ought to know that it is not easy for him to have a principled opinion, if he does not daily say the same things, and hear the same things, and at the same time apply them to life.

Epictetus, Fragment 72

To pursue the impossible is madness: but it is impossible for evil men not to do things of this sort.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 5.17

Deep Dive: Don't Be a Hypocrite

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
Matthew 23:13-15

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.
Matthew 23:23-31

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.
Luke 12:1-3

Let us say what we feel, and feel what we say; let speech harmonize with life. That man has fulfilled his promise who is the same person both when you see him and when you hear him. We shall not fail to see what sort of man he is and how great a man he is, if only he is one and the same. Our words should aim not to please, but to help.
Seneca, Moral Letters 75

Do not expect to enjoin right-doing upon men who are conscious of your own wrong-doing.
Musonius Rufus, Fragments

Immediately prescribe some character and some form to yourself, which you shall observe both when you are alone and when you meet with men.
Epictetus, Enchiridion 33.1

The first and most necessary part of philosophy is the use of theorems, for instance, that we must not lie. ... But we do the contrary...we lie; but the demonstration that we ought not to lie we have ready to hand.
Epictetus, Enchiridion 52

We ought not to make our exercises consist in means contrary to nature and adapted to cause admiration, for if we do so, we who call ourselves philosophers shall not differ at all from jugglers.
Epictetus, Discourses 3.12.1

When a man only drinks water, or does anything for the sake of discipline, whenever there is an opportunity he tells it to all: 'I only drink water.' Is it for this that you only drink water, for the purpose of drinking water? Man, if it is good for you to only drink water, do it; but if not, you are acting ridiculously. But if it is good for you and you do it, say nothing about it to those who are displeased with those who only drink water. What then, do you wish to please these very men?
Epictetus, Discourses 3.14.4-6

When you run against someone's wrong behaviour, go on at once to reflect what similar wrong act of your own there is; for instance, to esteem money or pleasure or glory as goods, and so on with each kind. For if you attend to this, you will quickly forget your anger, when it occurs to you at the same time that he is compelled, for what else can he do? Alternatively, if you can, remove what in him is subject to compulsion.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 10.30

Accustom yourself in the case of whatever is done by anyone, so far as possible to inquire within yourself: 'to what end does this man do this?' And begin with yourself and first examine yourself.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 10.37

How rotten and crafty is the man who says: 'I have made up my mind to deal plainly with you.' What are you about, my friend? This preface is not necessary. The intention will reveal itself, it ought to be graven on the forehead; the tone of voice should give that sound at once; the intention should shine out in the eyes at once, as the beloved at once reads the whole in the glances of lovers. The simple and good man ought to be entirely such, like the unsavoury man, that those who stand by detect him at once, whether he will or not, as soon as he comes near. But the affectation of simplicity is like a razor; nothing is uglier than the wolf's profession of friendship, avoid that above all. The good and simple and kind has these qualities in his eyes and they are not hidden.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 11.15

Deep Dive: Count Your Blessings

And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.

Mark 8:6

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves...and he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them.

Luke 22:17-19

In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Philippians 4:6

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Colossians 3:15-17

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have.

Hebrews 13:5

Deep Dive: Generosity Is a Pious Duty

For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Mark 9:41

When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Luke 14:12-14

He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

1 John 3:17-18

Use dumb animals and lifeless things and objects generally with a generous and free spirit, because you have reason and they have not; use men because they have reason, in a neighbourly spirit; and in all things call upon the gods for help. Let it make no difference to you for how long a time you will do these things, for even three hours in this spirit is enough.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.23

Deep Dive: Marriage Is Ordained of God

And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

Mark 10:2-12

His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

Matthew 19:10-12

Not the least significant part of the life of luxury and self-indulgence lies also in sexual excess; for example those who lead such a life crave a variety of loves not only lawful but unlawful ones as well, not women alone but also men; sometimes they pursue one love and sometimes another, and not being satisfied with those which are available, pursue those which are rare and inaccessible, and invent shameful intimacies, all of which constitute a grave indictment of manhood. Men who are not wantons or immoral are bound to consider sexual intercourse justified only when it occurs in marriage. ... But of all sexual relations those involving adultery are most unlawful, and no more tolerable are those of men with men, because it is a monstrous thing and contrary to nature. But, furthermore, leaving out of consideration adultery, all intercourse with women which is without lawful character is shameful and is practiced from lack of self-restraint. So no one with any self-control would think of having relations with a courtesan or a free woman apart from marriage, no, nor even with his own maid-servant. The fact that those relationships are not lawful or seemly makes them a disgrace and a reproach to those seeking them; whence it is that no one dares to do any of these things openly, not even if he has all but lost the ability to blush, and those who are not completely degenerate dare to do these things only in hiding and in secret. And yet to attempt to cover up what one is doing is equivalent to a confession of guilt. "That's all very well," you say, "but unlike the adulterer who wrongs the husband of the woman he corrupts, the man who has relations with a courtesan or a woman who has no husband wrongs no one for he does not destroy anyone's hope of children." I continue to maintain that everyone who sins and does wrong, even if it affects none of the people about him, yet immediately reveals himself as a worse and a less honorable person; for the wrong-doer by the very fact of doing wrong is worse and less honorable. Not to mention the injustice of the thing, there must be sheer wantonness in anyone yielding to the temptation of shameful pleasure and like swine rejoicing in his own vileness. In this category belongs the man

who has relations with his own slave-maid, a thing which some people consider quite without blame, since every master is held to have it in his power to use his slave as he wishes. In reply to this I have just one thing to say: if it seems neither shameful nor out of place for a master to have relations with his own slave, particularly if she happens to be unmarried, let him consider how he would like it if his wife had relations with a male slave. Would it not seem completely intolerable not only if the woman who had a lawful husband had relations with a slave, but even if a woman without a husband should have? And yet surely one will not expect men to be less moral than women, nor less capable of disciplining their desires, thereby revealing the stronger in judgment inferior to the weaker, the rulers to the ruled. In fact, it behooves men to be much better if they expect to be superior to women, for surely if they appear to be less self-controlled they will also be baser characters. What need is there to say that it is an act of licentiousness and nothing less for a master to have relations with a slave? Everyone knows that.

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 12

The primary end of marriage is community of life with a view to the procreation of children. The husband and wife, he used to say, should come together for the purpose of making a life in common and of procreating children, and furthermore of regarding all things in common between them, and nothing peculiar or private to one or the other, not even their own bodies. The birth of a human being which results from such a union is to be sure something marvelous, but it is not yet enough for the relation of husband and wife, inasmuch as quite apart from marriage it could result from any other sexual union, just as in the case of animals. But in marriage there must be above all perfect companionship and mutual love of husband and wife, both in health and in sickness and under all conditions, since it was with desire for this as well as for having children that both entered upon marriage. Where, then, this love for each other is perfect and the two share it completely, each striving to outdo the other in devotion, the marriage is ideal and worthy of envy, for such a union is beautiful. But where each looks only to his own interests and neglects the other, or, what is worse, when one is so minded and lives in the same house but fixes his attention elsewhere and is not willing to pull together with his yoke-mate nor to agree, then the union is doomed to disaster and though they live together, yet their common interests fare badly; eventually they separate entirely or they remain together and suffer what is worse than loneliness.

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 13A

Therefore those who contemplate marriage ought to have regard neither for family, whether either one be of high-born parents, nor for wealth, whether on either side there be great possessions, nor for physical traits, whether one or the other have beauty. For neither wealth nor beauty nor high birth is effective in promoting partnership of interest or sympathy, nor again are they significant for producing children. But as for the body it is enough for marriage that it be healthy, of normal appearance, and capable of hard work, such as would be less exposed to the snares of tempters, better adapted to perform physical labor, and not wanting in strength to beget or to bear children. With respect to character or soul one should expect that it be habituated to self-control and justice, and in a word, naturally disposed to virtue. These qualities should be present in both man and wife. For without sympathy of mind and character between husband and wife, what marriage can be good, what partnership advantageous? How could two human beings who are base have sympathy of spirit one with the other? Or how could one that is good be in harmony with one that is bad? No more than a crooked piece of wood could be fitted to a straight one, or two crooked ones be put together. For the crooked one will not fit another crooked one, and much less the opposite, a crooked with a straight one.

Musonius Rufus, 13B

Can it be that the man who chooses the single life is more patriotic, more a friend and partner of his fellow-man, than the man who maintains a home and rears children and contributes to the growth of his city, which is exactly what a married man does? It is clear, therefore, that it is fitting for a philosopher to concern himself with marriage and having children.

Musonius Rufus, Lecture 14

What does he lose who commits adultery? He loses the character of the modest, the temperate, the decent, the citizen, the neighbour.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.10.18

Today when I saw a beautiful woman, I did not say to myself, 'I wish I could lie with her,' and 'happy is her husband'; for he who says this says, 'Happy is her adulterer also.' Nor do I picture the rest to my mind: the woman present, and stripping herself and lying down by my side. I stroke my head and say, 'Well done, Epictetus, you have solved a fine little sophism, much finer than that which is called the master sophism.' And if even the woman is willing, and gives signs, and sends messages, and if she also fondle me and come close to me, and I should abstain and be victorious, that would be a sophism beyond that which is named the Liar, and the Quiescent. Over such a victory as this a man may justly be proud; not for proposing the master sophism.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.18.15-18

Your purpose is this, to return to your country, to relieve your kinsmen of anxiety, to discharge the duties of a citizen, to marry, to beget children, to fill the usual magistracies.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.23.38

'The sight of a beautiful young girl overpowers me. Well, have I not been overpowered before?' ... Did you not cherish this habit in you by adding to it the corresponding acts? And when you were overpowered by the young girl, did you come off unharmed?

Epictetus, Discourses 3.25.6-8

Like a true philosopher Theophrastus says, when comparing, as men commonly do compare, various faults, that errors of appetite are graver than errors of temper. For clearly one who loses his temper is turning away from Reason with a kind of pain and inward spasm; whereas he who offends through appetite is the victim of pleasure and is clearly more vicious in a way and more effeminate in his wrong-doing. Rightly then and in a truly philosophic spirit Theophrastus said that an offence attended with pleasure involves greater censure than one attended with pain. And, generally, the latter resembles more a man who was originally wronged and so is forced by pain to lose his temper; the other has begun it himself and has been impelled to do wrong, carried away by appetite to do what he does.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 2.10

Deep Dive: Be Justly Merciful

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17-20

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:14-15

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Matthew 18:15-17

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Matthew 18:21-35

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Mark 11:25-26

And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

John 18:22-23

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Galatians 3:24

When horses are harmed does it make them better or worse? Worse. ... And do not also dogs when harmed become worse... Necessarily. And men, my dear fellow, must we not say that when they are harmed it is in respect of the distinctive excellence or virtue of man that they become worse? Assuredly. ... Then it must be admitted, my friend, that men who are harmed become more unjust. ... Is it not then the function of the just man to harm neither friend nor anyone else, but the opposite? ... It has been made clear to us that in no case is it just to harm anyone.

Socrates, Republic 335b-335e

For such involuntary errors the law is not to hale people into court, but to take them and instruct and admonish them in private. For it is clear that if I am told about it, I shall stop doing that which I do involuntarily. But you avoided associating with me and instructing me, and were unwilling to do so, but you hale me in here, where it is the law to hale in those who need punishment, not instruction.

Socrates, Apology 26a

'What then? shall I not hurt him, who has hurt me?' In the first place consider what hurt is, and remember what you have heard from the philosophers. For if the good consists in the will, and the evil also in the will, see if what you say is not this: 'What then, since that man has hurt himself by doing an unjust act to me, shall I not hurt myself by doing some unjust act to him?' Why do we not imagine to ourselves something of this kind? But where there is any detriment to the body or to our possession, there is harm there; and where the same thing happens to the faculty of the will, you suppose that there is no harm.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.10.24-27

Deep Dive: Reflect the Light

Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Titus 2:7-8

When you have decided that a thing ought to be done and are doing it, never avoid being seen doing it, though the many shall form an unfavorable opinion about it. For if it is not right to do it, avoid doing the thing; but if it is right, why are you afraid of those who shall find fault wrongly?

Epictetus, Enchiridion 35

Service Is True Leadership

In the case of many men, their vices, being powerless, escape notice; although, as soon as the persons in question have become satisfied with their own strength, the vices will be no less daring than those which prosperity has already disclosed. These men simply lack the means whereby they may unfold their wickedness. Similarly, one can handle even a poisonous snake while it is stiff with cold; the poison is not lacking; it is merely numbed into inaction. In the case of many men, their cruelty, ambition, and indulgence only lack the favour of Fortune to make them dare crimes that would match the worst. That their wishes are the same you will in a moment discover, in this way: give them the power equal to their wishes.

Seneca, Moral Letters 42

Deep Dive: Cultivate Natural Wonder

Have you anything better or greater to see than the sun, the moon, the stars, the whole earth, the sea? But if indeed you comprehend him who administers the whole, and carry him about in yourself, do you still desire small stones, and a beautiful rock?

Epictetus, Discourses 2.16.32-33

Deep Dive: Be of Good Cheer

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

James 1:2-3

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

1 Peter 4:12-14

We ought, therefore, to bring ourselves to believe that all the vices of the crowd are, not hateful, but ridiculous, and to imitate Democritus rather than Heraclitus. For the latter, whenever he went forth into public, used to weep, the former to laugh; to the one all human doings seemed to be miseries, to the other follies. And so we ought to adopt a lighter view of things, and put up with them in an indulgent spirit; it is more human to laugh at life than to lament over it. Add, too, that he deserves better of the human race also who laughs at it than he who bemoans it; for the one allows it some measure of good hope, while the other foolishly weeps over things that he despairs of seeing corrected.

Seneca, On Tranquility of Mind 15.2

Deep Dive: Reflect Privately On Unity With the Divine

As for your former prayers, you may dispense the gods from answering them; offer new prayers; pray for a sound mind and for good health, first of soul and then of body. And of course you should offer those prayers frequently. Call boldly upon God; you will not be asking him for that which belongs to another.

Seneca, Moral Letters 110

These are the ideas to which people who take up philosophy should apply themselves, which they should write about every day, and in which they should train themselves.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.25

Deep Dive: Pay Attention and Stand Guard

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Ephesians 6:11-18

On the occasion of every event that befalls you, remember to turn to yourself and inquire what power you have for turning it to use. If you see a fair man or a fair woman, you will find that the power to resist is temperance. If labour be presented to you, you will find that it is endurance. If it be abusive words, you will find it to be patience. And if you have been thus formed to the proper habit, the impressions will not carry you along with them.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 10

Reverence your faculty of judgement. On this it entirely rests that your governing self no longer has a judgement disobedient to Nature and to the estate of a reasonable being. This judgement promises deliberateness, familiar friendship with men, and to follow in the train of the gods.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 3.9

The art of living resembles wrestling more than dancing, in as much as it stands prepared and unshaken to meet what comes and what it did not foresee.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.61

Deep Dive: Traditions Can Violate Good Sense and Piety

But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. (quoting Hosea 6:6: For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.)

Matthew 12:7

And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

Mark 3:4

Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

Luke 6:9

And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

Luke 13:14-17

And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

Luke 14:3-5

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Romans 2:28-29

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.

Romans 14:5-6

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,

and ye are not your own?

1 Corinthians 6:19

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2 Corinthians 6:16

If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. ... For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. ... I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

Galatians 5:2,6,12

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.

Colossians 2:11

You are not Hercules and you are not able to purge away the wickedness of others; nor yet are you Theseus, able to purge away the evil things of Attica. Clear away your own. From yourself, from your thoughts cast away, instead of Procrustes and Sciron, sadness, fear, desire, envy, malevolence, avarice, timidity, intemperance. But it is not possible to eject these things otherwise than by looking to God only, by fixing your affections on him only, by being consecrated to his commands. But if you choose anything else, you will with sighs and groans be compelled to follow what is stronger than yourself, always seeking tranquillity and never able to find it; for you seek tranquillity there where it is not, and you neglect to seek it where it is.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.16.45-47

Remembering these rules, rejoice in that which is present, and be content with the things which come in season. If you see anything which you have learned and inquired about occurring to you in your course of life, be delighted at it. If you have laid aside or have lessened bad disposition and a habit of reviling; if you have done so with rash temper, obscene words, hastiness, sluggishness; if you are not moved by what you formerly were, and not in the same way as you once were, you can celebrate a festival daily, today because you have behaved well in one act, and tomorrow because you have behaved well in another. How much greater is this a reason for making sacrifices than a consulship or the government of a province? These things come to you from yourself and from the gods. Remember this: who gives these things and to whom, and for what purpose. If you cherish yourself in these thoughts, do you still think that it makes any difference where you shall be happy, where you shall please God? Are not the gods equally distant from all places? Do they not see from all places alike that which is going on?

Epictetus, Discourses 4.4.45-48

From my father (by adoption): ... No superstitious fear of divine powers nor with man any courting of the public or obsequiousness or cultivation of popular favour.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 1.16

For what comes to pass in the course of change nothing is evil, as nothing is good for what exists in

consequence of change.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.42

In all things like a pupil of Antoninus: ...his tolerance of plain-spoken opposition to his opinions and delight when any one indicated a better course; and how he revered the gods without superstition.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.30

Deep Dive: Change Your Mind and Let Go of the Past

But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 5:30-32

As a mark is not set up for the purpose of missing the aim, so neither does the nature of evil exist in the world.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 27

But the rational and the irrational appear such in a different way to different persons, just as the good and the bad, the profitable and the unprofitable. For this reason, particularly, we need discipline, in order to learn how to adapt the preconception of the rational and the irrational to the several things conformably to nature.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.2.5-6

For this is the cause to men of all their evils, the not being able to adapt the general preconceptions to the several things. ... For who has not a preconception of that which is bad: that it is hurtful, that it ought to be avoided, that it ought in every way to be guarded against? One preconception is not repugnant to another, only where it comes to the matter of adaptation. ... He is gone far from the mark, he has missed the adaptation, he is embarrassed, he seeks the things which are not at all pertinent to the matter... For what is that which every man seeks? To live secure, to be happy, to do everything as he wishes, not to be hindered, nor compelled.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.1.42-46

In general, evil does no injury to the Universe, and particular evil does no injury to a neighbour, but only injures him to whom it is permitted to be delivered from it as soon as ever he himself determines.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 8.55

Deep Dive: Use Reason to Straighten Judgment, Not Twist It

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

1 Corinthians 13:11

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

Ephesians 4:13-15

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

1 Thessalonians 5:21

Some things [are] hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:16-18

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1 John 4:1

I admire your desire for learning as being a true object for the wishes of mankind, and one too that tends to their advantage. And the man who aims at the study of philosophy has a proper disregard for the popular kind of instruction which tends only to the corruption of the morals.

Zeno, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* 7

Freedom from precipitancy is a knowledge when to give or withhold the mind's assent to impressions.

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* 7 (in reference to Zeno and Stoic doctrine)

Be careful, Crito, that you do not, in agreeing to this, agree to something you do not believe; ... consider very carefully whether you agree and share in this opinion ... do you disagree and refuse your assent?

Socrates, *Crito* 48d

When a man without proper knowledge concerning arguments has confidence in the truth of an argument

and afterwards thinks that it is false, whether it really is so or not, and this happens again and again; then you know, those men especially who have spent their time in disputation come to believe that they are the wisest of men and that they alone have discovered that there is nothing sound or sure in anything, whether argument or anything else, but all things go up and down like the tide in the Euripus, and nothing is stable for any length of time.

Then, Phaedo, if there is any system of argument which is true and sure and can be learned, it would be a sad thing if a man, because he has met with some of those arguments which seem to be sometimes true and sometimes false, should then not blame himself or his own lack of skill, but should end, in his vexation, by throwing the blame gladly upon the arguments and should hate and revile them all the rest of his life, and be deprived of the truth and knowledge of reality. ... Let us be on our guard against this, and let us not admit into our souls the notion that there is no soundness in arguments at all. Let us far rather assume that we ourselves are not yet in sound condition and that we must strive manfully and eagerly to become so, so and the others for the sake of all your future life, and I because of my impending death; for I fear that I am not just now in a philosophical frame of mind as regards this particular question, but am contentious, like quite uncultured persons. For when they argue about anything, they do not care what the truth is in the matters they are discussing, but are eager only to make their own views seem true to their hearers. And I fancy I differ from them just now only to this extent: I shall not be eager to make what I say seem true to my hearers, except as a secondary matter, but shall be very eager to make myself believe it.

Socrates, Phaedo 90b-91b

Straightway then practice saying to every harsh impression, 'You are an impression, and in no manner what you appear to be.' Then examine it by the rules which you possess.

Epictetus, Enchiridion 1.5

It is the chief and the first work of a philosopher to examine impressions, and to distinguish them, and to admit none without examination. You see even in the matter of coin, in which our interest appears to be somewhat concerned, how we have invented an art, and how many means the assayer uses to try the value of coin, the sight, the touch, the smell, and lastly the hearing. He throws the coin down, and observes the sound, and he is not content with its sounding once, but through his great attention he becomes a musician. In like manner, where we think that to be mistaken and not to be mistaken make a great difference, there we apply great attention to discovering the things which can deceive. But in the matter of our miserable ruling faculty, yawning and sleeping, we carelessly admit every impression, for the harm is not noticed.

When then you would know how careless you are with respect to good and evil, and how active with respect to things which are indifferent, observe how you feel with respect to being deprived of the sight of the eyes, and how with respect to being deceived, and you will discover that you are far from feeling as you ought to do in relation to good and evil.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.20.7-12

What is the cause of assenting to anything? The fact that it appears to be true. It is not possible then to assent to that which appears not to be true. Why? Because this is the nature of the understanding: to incline to the true, to be dissatisfied with the false, and in matters uncertain to withhold assent. ... When then any man assents to that which is false, be assured that he did not intend to assent to it as false, for every soul is unwillingly deprived of the truth, as Plato says; but the falsity seemed to him to be true.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.28.1-4

Can you even in any degree understand me when I say I shall demonstrate a proof to you? How? Do you understand this very thing, what demonstration is, or how anything is demonstrated, or by what means; or what things are like demonstration, but are not demonstration? Do you know what is true or what is false? What is consequent on a thing, what is contrary to a thing, or not consistent, or inconsistent? But must I excite you to philosophy, and how? Shall I show to you the contradiction in the opinions of most men, through which they differ about things good and evil, and about things which are profitable and unprofitable, when you know not this very thing, what contradiction is?

Epictetus, Discourses 2.24.13-15

Fix your judgments and exercise yourselves in them.

Epictetus, Discourses 3.16.13

So live, and continue to live, you who in name only have approached philosophy, and have disgraced its theorems as far as you can by showing them to be useless and unprofitable to those who take them up; you who have never sought constancy, freedom from perturbation, and from passions: you who have not sought any person for the sake of this object, but many for the sake of syllogisms. ... But as if all your affairs were well and secure, you have been resting on the third discipline, that of things being strengthened, in order that you may strongly possess what? Cowardice, mean spirit, the admiration of the rich, desire without attaining any end, and avoidance which fails in the attempt? About security in these things you have been anxious. Ought you not to have gained something in addition from reason, and then to have protected this with security?

Epictetus, Discourses 3.26.13-15

What then is the material of the philosopher? Is it a cloak? No, but reason. What is his end? Is it to wear a cloak? No, but to possess the reason in a right state. Of what kind are his theorems? Are they those about the way in which the beard becomes great or the hair long? No, but rather what Zeno says: to know the elements of reason, what kind of a thing each of them is, and how they are fitted to one another, and what things are consequent upon them.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.8.12

Do not be precipitate in assenting before you apply the natural rule.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.10.3

Men are pleased with finding excuses for their faults.

Epictetus, Fragment 15

From Rusticus: ... To read books accurately and not be satisfied with superficial thinking about things or agree hurriedly with those who talk around a subject.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 1.7

Always make a figure or outline of the imagined object as it occurs, in order to see distinctly what it is in its

essence, naked, as a whole and parts; and say to yourself its individual name and the names of the things of which it was compounded and into which it will be broken up. For nothing is so able to create greatness of mind as the power methodically and truthfully to test each thing that meets one in life, and always to look upon it so as to attend at the same time to the use which this particular thing contributes to a Universe of a certain definite kind, what value it has in reference to the Whole, and what to man, who is a citizen of the highest City, whereof all other cities are like households. What is this which now creates an image in me, what is its composition?

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 3.11.1-3

Always remember what Heraclitus said:... 'we must not be like children with parents', that is, accept things simply as we have received them.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 4.46

It is possible to entertain no thought about this, and not to be troubled in spirit; for things of themselves are not so constituted as to create our judgements upon them.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.52

In conversation one ought to follow closely what is being said; in the field of impulse to follow what is happening; in the latter case to see immediately what is the object of reference, in the former to mark closely the meaning expressed.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.4

Deep Dive: Exercise Discretion

One must not talk to a man unless he is willing to listen.

Seneca, Moral Letters 29

Would you have me to tell him, that beauty consists not in being daubed with muck, but that it lies in the rational part? Has he any desire of beauty? Has he any form of it in his mind? Go and talk to a hog, and tell him not to roll in the mud.

Epictetus, Discourses 4.11.29

When a man has seemed to us to have talked with candor about his own affairs, how is it that at last we are ourselves also induced to discover to him our own secrets and we think this to be candid behavior? ... Show yourself to me to be faithful, modest, and steady: show me that you have friendly opinions; show that your cask has no hole in it; and you will see how I shall not wait for you to trust me with your affairs, but I myself shall come to you and ask you to hear mine. For who does not choose to make use of a good vessel? ... You must remember then among general principles that secret discourses require fidelity and corresponding opinions. But where can we now find these easily?

Epictetus, Discourses 4.13.1,15-16,23

Deep Dive: Become Unstoppable

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Isaiah 28:16

'It is wrong to live under constraint; but no man is constrained to live under constraint.' ... On all sides lie many short and simple paths to freedom... We may spurn the very constraints that hold us.

Seneca, Moral Letters 12

It is circumstances which show what men are. Therefore when a difficulty falls upon you, remember that God, like a trainer of wrestlers, has matched you with a rough young man. 'For what purpose?' you may say. Why, that you may become an Olympic conqueror; but it is not accomplished without sweat. In my opinion no man has had a more profitable difficulty than you have had, if you choose to make use of it as an athlete would deal with a young antagonist.

Epictetus, Discourses 1.24.1-2

For we ought by all means to apply our art to some external material, not as valuing the material, but, whatever it may be, showing our art in it. Thus too the weaver does not make wool, but exercises his art upon such as he receives.

Epictetus, Discourses 2.5.21-22

The governing principle it is which wakes itself up and adapts itself, making itself of whatever kind it wills and making all that happens to it appear to be of whatever kind it wills.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 6.8

Whatever comes to pass is suited to God or man, and is neither novel nor hard to deal with, but familiar and easy to handle.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 7.68

As each reasonable creature receives the rest of his abilities from the Nature of the Whole, so have we received this ability, too, from her. Just as she converts every obstacle and resistance, puts it into its place in the order of necessity and makes it a part of herself, so, too, the reasonable creature can make every obstacle material for himself and employ it for whatever kind of purpose he has set out upon.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 8.35