



**The Discourses of Epictetus; With the
Encheiridion and Fragments: Translated, With
Notes, a Life of Epictetus, and a View of His
Philosophy (Classic Reprint)**

Epictetus Epictetus

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Very little is known of the life of Epictetus. It is said that he was a native of Hierapolis in Phrygia, a town between the Maeander and a branch of the Maeander named the Lycus. Hierapolis is mentioned in the epistle of Paul to the people of Colossae (Coloss. iv. 13); from which it has been concluded that there was a Christian church in Hierapolis in the time of the apostle. The date of the birth of Epictetus is unknown. The only recorded fact of his early life is that he was a slave in Rome, and his master was Epaphroditus, a profligate freedman of the emperor Nero. There is a story that the master broke his slave's leg by torturing him; but it is better to trust to the evidence of Simplicius, the commentator on the Encheiridion or Manual, who says that Epictetus was weak in body and lame from an early age. It is not said how he became a slave; but it has been asserted in modern times that the parents sold the child. I have not, however, found any authority for this statement. It may be supposed that the young slave showed intelligence, for his master sent or permitted him to attend the lectures of Marcus Antonius Rufus, an eminent Stoic philosopher. It may seem strange that such a master should have wished to have his slave made into a philosopher; but Garnier, the author of *Manoirie Bur les ouvrages de Epictete*, explains this matter very well in a communication to Schweighaeuser. Garnier says: Epictete.

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