

## Advice from Robinson Crusoe

*Robinson Crusoe* is a novel by Daniel Defoe that most of us likely studied in our high-school and college English classes. It was first published in 1719. The first edition credited the work's protagonist, Robinson Crusoe, as its author, leading many readers to believe he was a real person and the book a travelogue of true incidents.

The title character is a castaway who spends 28 years on a remote tropical island near Trinidad, encountering cannibals, captives and mutineers before ultimately being rescued.



Author Defoe gave us some good advice through his fictitious character. The first thing Robinson Crusoe did when he found himself on the deserted island was to make a list ...

- On one side of the list, he wrote down all his problems. On the other side, he wrote down all his blessings.
- On one side, he wrote: *I do not have any clothes.* On the other side, he wrote: *But it's warm and I don't really need any.*
- On one side, he wrote: *All of the provisions were lost.* But on the other side, he wrote: *But there's plenty of fresh fruit and water on the island.*

And on down the list he went. In this fashion, he discovered that for every negative aspect about his situation, there was a positive aspect, something to be thankful for.

Here are some key quotes from Defoe through his Crusoe character:

- *Those people cannot enjoy comfortably what God has given them because they see and covet what He has not given them. All of our discontents for what we want appear to me to spring from want of thankfulness for what we have.*
- *It put me upon reflecting how little repining there would be among mankind, at any condition of life, if people would rather compare their condition with those that were worse, in order to be thankful, than be always comparing them with those which are better, to assist their murmurings and complaining.*
- *Redemption from sin is greater than redemption from affliction.*
- *From this moment I began to conclude in my mind that it was possible for me to be more happy in this forsaken, solitary condition than it was possible I should ever have been in any other particular state in the world; and with this thought I was going to give thanks to God for bringing me to this place.*

(more)

It is easy to find ourselves on an island of despair. Perhaps it is time that we sit down and take an inventory of our blessings. Maybe we are long overdue in expressing our thanks to God.

Israel's King David gave this advice for us in difficult situations:

*Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord (Psalm 27:14 NKJV).*

– Beecher Hunter