

To be human in robinson crusoe religion essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Usually, one finds himself or herself in a very difficult situation. In many occasions, the situation may be caused mainly by the same individual thus easily understood. But the situations often come that cannot be explained. In this perspective, a number of people go back to religion to look for answers. Using religion as a solution to problems makes people eventually become convenient converts or transients. The faith of the same convert lasts for as long as the problem exists.

In the novel Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe, Crusoe faces a lot of problems. The same problems prompt Crusoe to seek God's intervention. A religious conversation is made by Crusoe when shipwrecked in the desolate island. After a critical examination of his past life, Crusoe concludes that his detention on the island is the punishment by God on his past foolish life.

Crusoe's faith about God has a positive role in his life on the lonely island. He gets hope in God's words seen in the bible that say " call me in the time of trouble and I will deliver, and you shall glorify me". These words highly inspire Crusoe. The hope of being delivered gives him the reason to live. Rather than despairing in his condition, he is able to produce the best from the situation with the hope of being delivered eventually. He makes the best of the situation on the desolate island. He decides to put his energy into use rather than gloating about the situation. He manages to furnish himself with a lot of things by utilizing the raw materials and the island. On a very detailed perspective, Crusoe's faith in God gave him something that was indeed urgently needed than optimism (Defoe 10).

Crusoe was given a means through which he could communicate what he was thinking about by being faithful in God. However, God is an abstraction that needs imagination or belief so as to be seen as an abstraction. As a result his mind was kept active and God kept him from being insane. Without God, his loneliness perhaps could drive him over the hedge (Defoe 98). His faith not only gave him hope for liberty, but also played a role as an intangible “ something” that worked as a replacement for the communicator (person).

His faith dealt a big blow when he discovers a man’s footprint in the beach in the island. Fear raged over his mind on seeing the footprint. He was shocked and thought if the devil wanted to contrive the man’s image of the foot so as to scare him away. When the reason sets in, he decides that the sign of the foot print could be the remnant of a cannibal tribe’s visit to the island. He is terrified by the cannibals and says that fear send away all his religious hopes and the previous confidence in God that was based on an amazing as he had of His goodness, now gone. His faith seems to be very small and one must wonder on the validity of his conversation. He accepts the invasion of his island as simply God’s punishment and vows that it was his unquestionable duty to resign himself to the will of God and also his duty to hope and pray and submit to the dictates of His divine intervention (Defoe 60).

His resignation to God’s will does not mean that he is actually a convert. It could be interpreted as the ultimate desperate attempt to conciliate God. He certainly does not want to anger Him anymore than he had done before.

Perhaps he saw the footprint as a lure to live his faith. Thus, when he resigns himself to the will of God, he might be simply saying “ God, I do not want to

anger you any longer, in fact if you are listening now I'm willing to accept it as part of my fate". By also accepting the footprint and the probability of alien cannibalistic attack as God's work and a section of fate, he liberates himself from having to take part in any form of action. Once he resigns himself to God is happy symbolizing a great load which is fear and worry having been removed from his shoulders.

The next moment, Crusoe utilizes his moral reasoning lasts for a short period after he sees the footprint on the beach. He finds human bones littering everywhere in the beach. He hates the sight and forgets about the cannibal's presence as God's punishment and decides to end the feasting. He plans to kill some of the cannibals or all of them if possible. However he finds out that he has no power to be the judge and the executioner of savages at the same time. He reasons that the cannibals had performed what he believed were the crimes for a long period of time and had gone unpunished by God so that the sinner lacks any right to cause harm to them.

This may symbolize the new entry of Crusoe's moral values, for the remainder of his detention on the island. By Friday he fulfills the unwritten urge to God. The words by which his first conversation was made "call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver, and you shall glorify me" played a role as an agreement between Him and God. Crusoe wanted a companion and God deliver Friday. Crusoe replied to this by glorifying the name of God to Friday; converting the day to Christianity (Defoe 56).

This "contract" is just a symbolic reflection. Crusoe never openly mentions the words of God that have been already mentioned as the reason behind

Friday's conversation nor does he show any contractual duty to God. Perhaps the fact that he does not want to mentioned the duty or contract shows that he indeed underwent a very strong conversation of religious nature on his detainment in the island (Defoe 29). Now, may be he sees glorifying God as a "matter of fact". At any point in time, he converted Friday to Christianity and the conversation appears to have rested favorably with Him. Shortly after the conversion of Friday, Crusoe is home delivered by God after a period of thirty five years detention of Robinson in the island (Defoe 33).

When he comes back home, Crusoe's behavior testifies his religious ambivalences. It is clear and understandable that he is a changed man. But, he does not really base his change on God. Indeed, God appears to have become a secondary issue in his life. He asserts his belief in God, and would not be shaken from his belief. This is seen when he sells his plantation. He did so because of the fear of religious persecution. By then Brazil was in the middle of Inquisition by Spain with Crusoe having no intentions of changing his religion to Roman Catholic from protestant as a way of escaping the Inquisition. Here we can see his belief in God, but what is the meaning of this belief? (Defoe 67)

One may ask if Crusoe's belief was a reflection of devotion and faith. However, it seems not to be so. When he goes to England, he avoids going to church to thank God for arriving safely. Instead he asks about his financial situation. His generous personality is seen when he arrives in England and supports the widow. The question that comes up from this scenario is the amount of generosity that he attributes to God. Actually, there is none. His "generous intentions" are clearly not religious. He considers kindness. His <https://assignbuster.com/to-be-human-in-robinson-crusoe-religion-essay/>

actions are not manipulated by the spiritual duties. In short, it appears that he has achieved a true, hidden belief in God by what he experiences in the island, however that the same belief is not necessary in his personal life after his detainment in the island.

Before his detention, Crusoe had no fear or belief in God. He finds God during his detainment in the island and in the process goes back to England believing in God. In this perspective, one can argue that Crusoe is changed (converted). Regardless of having no faith in God before his detention, he returns with a very strong belief that even makes him sell his plantation. The question then is " how far will the belief take Crusoe though? He sets aside parts of every day so as to pray to God. Back in England he barely prays. Eventually, the readers see him going back to his old personality. He takes no heed of the warnings of the old woman whose husband had died and goes out to look for his island. Even with his belief in God, he is ruled by impulse (Defoe 91). He keeps on changing his personality from that of wanting to be a convert and avoiding being one. Indeed many readers may not actually understand the position of his principles. It appears that the only thing we can suggest about him is that he was exposed to changes when he was detained in the island. The detention brought significant changes to his life and that is where the main things in his life began to change. We can say that it was a major turning point in his life (Defoe 76).

In conclusion, it easy to say that Crusoe experienced just but a part of the conversion process. He is a convert in the perspective that he at least managed to get a belief in God while in detention; however this is the point where the change ends. The remaining faith that Crusoe showed when he

<https://assignbuster.com/to-be-human-in-robinson-crusoe-religion-essay/>

was on the island was timely. In this case Crusoe is the icon of the “ convenient convert”. His great devotion and great faith ended once his bad condition was settled. The combination of his belief, but little faith in God then denies him the chance to be a complete convert.