

Great Christian Adventures

A Companion Guide to Timeless Christian Classics



*The Swiss Family
Robinson*



The Cross Triumphant



Sir Gibbie

LITERATURE ✦ LEVEL 7

Great Christian Adventures: A Companion Guide to Timeless Christian Classics
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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-968345-11-2

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Cover Design: Rei Suzuki
Interior Layout: Turley and Sons Design Co.

Published by:
Generations
PO Box 1398
Elizabeth, CO 80107
www.generations.org

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Contents

Course Introduction	7
Course Schedule	9

The Swiss Family Robinson

Chapter 1	22
Chapter 2	25
Chapter 3	28
Chapter 4	31
Chapter 5	35
Chapter 6	37
Chapter 7	40
Chapter 8	43
Chapter 9	46
Chapter 10	50
Chapter 11	53
Chapter 12	56
Chapter 13	58
Chapter 14	60
Chapter 15	62
Chapter 16	65
Chapter 17	68
Chapter 18	70
Comprehension Exam	73
Essay Assignment	74

The Cross Triumphant

Chapter 1—The Only Son of His Mother	78
Chapter 2—The Making of a Rabbi	80

Chapter 3—The Shepherd’s Story	82
Chapter 4—The Child and the Law	84
Chapter 5—At the Fountain	86
Chapter 6—Expiation	88
Chapter 7—In the Temple	90
Chapter 8—Concerning the Prince	91
Chapter 9—A Question and an Answer	92
Chapter 10—Jesus IV	93
Chapter 11—The Rejected	94
Chapter 12—Out of the Depths	96
Chapter 13—In the New Moon	97
Chapter 14—A Singer of Hymns	99
Chapter 15—A Simple Creed	100
Chapter 16—With the Chiefs of the Nation	101
Chapter 17—Merodah	103
Chapter 18—A Ruler of Jerusalem	105
Chapter 19—A Daughter of Herod	107
Chapter 20—“As Birds Flying”	109
Chapter 21—The Last Victory	111
Chapter 22—In Aphtha	113
Chapter 23—The House Desolate	115
Chapter 24—The Last High Priest	117
Chapter 25—The Shopkeeper of the Agra	119
Chapter 26—Out of the North	121
Chapter 27—A Hired Servant	122
Chapter 28—The Coming Storm	123
Chapter 29—Bar-Gioras	125
Chapter 30—“Lo, I Am with You Alway”	126
Chapter 31—An Open Gate	128
Chapter 32—The Wisdom of Fools	130
Chapter 33—A Meeting of the Sanhedrim	132
Chapter 34—The Black Fast	133
Chapter 35—A More Excellent Way	134
Chapter 36—Victory	135
Comprehension Exam	137
Essay Assignment	139

Sir Gibbie

Chapter 1—The City's Urchin	144
Chapter 2—Turnip and Dulse	146
Chapter 3—Mistress Croale's Parlour	148
Chapter 4—Gibbie's Calling	150
Chapter 5—Sir George.	152
Chapter 6—The Town Sparrow	154
Chapter 7—Sambo	156
Chapter 8—Up Daurside.	158
Chapter 9—The Barn.	160
Chapter 10—The Cottage	161
Chapter 11—Glashgar	163
Chapter 12—Through the Ceiling	165
Chapter 13—Donal Grant.	166
Chapter 14—Apprenticeship	168
Chapter 15—Secret Service.	170
Chapter 16—The Broonie	172
Chapter 17—The Laird	173
Chapter 18—Ambush	175
Chapter 19—Punishment	176
Chapter 20—Refuge.	178
Chapter 21—A New Son	181
Chapter 22—"Gibbie"	183
Chapter 23—The Beast Loon o' Glashgar	185
Chapter 24—The Gamekeeper	187
Chapter 25—Wisdom of the Wise	189
Chapter 26—The Beast Boy	191
Chapter 27—The Lorrie Meadow	193
Chapter 28—Father and Daughter.	194
Chapter 29—Earthquake and Storm	196
Chapter 30—Flood.	197
Chapter 31—Glashruach.	198
Chapter 32—Angus MacPholp.	199
Chapter 33—The Raft	201
Chapter 34—Mr. Sclater	202

Chapter 35—The Muckle Hoose	203
Chapter 36—The City Again.	205
Chapter 37—Daur Street.	207
Chapter 38—Donal in the City.	209
Chapter 39—Service	210
Chapter 40—The Sinner	212
Chapter 41—The Girls.	214
Chapter 42—Mr. Worldly Wiseman	216
Chapter 43—Growing	218
Chapter 44—Fergus Duff	220
Chapter 45—The Quarry.	222
Chapter 46—Night Watch.	224
Chapter 47—Of Age.	226
Chapter 48—The Auld Hoose o’ Galbraith.	228
Chapter 49—The Laird and the Preacher	230
Chapter 50—A Hiding Place from the Wind.	232
Chapter 51—The Confession	234
Chapter 52—Catastrophe	236
Chapter 53—Preparations.	238
Chapter 54—The Wedding	239
Chapter 55—The Burn.	241
Comprehension Exam.	243
Essay Assignment.	244

Answer Keys

The Swiss Family Robinson.	245
The Cross Triumphant.	253
Sir Gibbie.	261



Course Introduction

This one-year course provides students with the opportunity to study Christian literature written in the 19th century.

This course includes the following features:

- Chapter summaries and assignments for *The Swiss Family Robinson*, *The Cross Triumphant*, and *Sir Gibbie*
- Comprehension exams for each book
- Essay assignments for each book

Course Objectives

Students completing this course will:

- Increase reading comprehension and vocabulary
- Examine biblical teaching by studying the books in light of Scripture
- Seek to apply and meditate on important truths from the various readings

Lesson Schedule

The lesson schedule included in this workbook is a suggested schedule. Teachers and students may adapt the schedule to suit their needs. The lesson schedule is based on a 36-week school year divided into two semesters.

Grading Assignments

The Teacher/Parent may determine how to grade the assignments. We offer these suggested guidelines to grade assignments. For each assignment, divide total number of questions correct with the total number of questions possible to calculate the percentage.

For example, if 8 out of 11 questions were correct, then the percentage grade for that assignment will be 72%. $8 \div 11 = 72\%$.

The following may be used for grade values:

- A = 90–100%
- B = 80–89%
- C = 70–79%
- D = 60–69%
- F = 0–59%

Credits

Upon successful completion of this course, we recommend 1 credit in English Literature.

For Christ's Kingdom,
Joshua Schwisow
The Generations Curriculum Team
April 2018



Course Schedule

SFR=*The Swiss Family Robinson*

TCT=*The Cross Triumphant*

SG=*Sir Gibbie*

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
1st Semester 1st Quarter			Suggested Daily Schedule		
Week 1	1	SFR Introduction			
	2				
	3	SFR Chapter 1			
	4				
	5	SFR Chapter 2			
Week 2	6	SFR Chapter 3			
	7				
	8	SFR Chapter 4			
	9				
	10	SFR Chapter 5			
Week 3	11	SFR Chapter 6			
	12				
	13	SFR Chapter 7			
	14				
	15	SFR Chapter 8			

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 4	16	SFR Chapter 9			
	17				
	18	SFR Chapter 10			
	19				
	20	SFR Chapter 11			
Week 5	21	SFR Chapter 12			
	22				
	23	SFR Chapter 13			
	24				
	25	SFR Chapter 14			
Week 6	26	SFR Chapter 15			
	27				
	28	SFR Chapter 16			
	29				
	30	SFR Chapter 17			
Week 7	31	SFR Chapter 18			
	32				
	33	SFR Comprehension Exam			
	34				
	35	SFR Essay Assignment			

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 8	36	TCT Introduction			
	37				
	38	TCT Chapter 1			
	39				
	40	TCT Chapter 2			
Week 9	41	TCT Chapter 3			
	42				
	43	TCT Chapter 4			
	44				
	45	TCT Chapter 5			
1st Semester 2nd Quarter <i>Suggested Daily Schedule</i>					
Week 1	46	TCT Chapter 6			
	47				
	48	TCT Chapter 7			
	49				
	50	TCT Chapter 8			
Week 2	51	TCT Chapter 9			
	52				
	53	TCT Chapter 10			
	54				
	55	TCT Chapter 11			

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 3	56	TCT Chapter 12			
	57				
	58	TCT Chapter 13			
	59				
	60	TCT Chapter 14			
Week 4	61	TCT Chapter 15			
	62				
	63	TCT Chapter 16			
	64				
	65	TCT Chapter 17			
Week 5	66	TCT Chapter 18			
	67				
	68	TCT Chapter 19			
	69				
	70	TCT Chapter 20			
Week 6	71	TCT Chapter 21			
	72				
	73	TCT Chapter 22			
	74				
	75	TCT Chapter 23			

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 7	76	TCT Chapter 24			
	77				
	78	TCT Chapter 25			
	79				
	80	TCT Chapter 26			
Week 8	81	TCT Chapter 27			
	82				
	83	TCT Chapter 28			
	84				
	85	TCT Chapter 29			
Week 9	86	TCT Chapter 30			
	87				
	88	TCT Chapter 31			
	89				
	90	TCT Chapter 32			
			Mid-Term Grade		

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
2nd Semester 3rd Quarter			<i>Suggested Daily Schedule</i>		
Week 1	91	TCT Chapter 33			
	92				
	93	TCT Chapter 34			
	94				
	95	TCT Chapter 35			
Week 2	96	TCT Chapter 36			
	97				
	98	TCT Comprehension Exam			
	99				
	100	TCT Essay Assignment			
Week 3	101	SG Introduction			
	102	SG Chapter 1			
	103	SG Chapter 2			
	104	SG Chapter 3			
	105				
Week 4	106	SG Chapter 4			
	107	SG Chapter 5			
	108	SG Chapter 6			
	109	SG Chapter 7			
	110				

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 5	111	SG Chapter 8			
	112	SG Chapter 9			
	113	SG Chapter 10			
	114	SG Chapter 11			
	115				
Week 6	116	SG Chapter 12			
	117	SG Chapter 13			
	118	SG Chapter 14			
	119	SG Chapter 15			
	120				
Week 7	121	SG Chapter 16			
	122	SG Chapter 17			
	123	SG Chapter 18			
	124	SG Chapter 19			
	125				
Week 8	126	SG Chapter 20			
	127	SG Chapter 21			
	128	SG Chapter 22			
	129	SG Chapter 23			
	130				

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 9	131	SG Chapter 24			
	132	SG Chapter 25			
	133	SG Chapter 26			
	134	SG Chapter 27			
	135				
2nd Semester 4th Quarter <i>Suggested Daily Schedule</i>					
Week 1	136	SG Chapter 28			
	137	SG Chapter 29			
	138	SG Chapter 30			
	139	SG Chapter 31			
	140				
Week 2	141	SG Chapter 32			
	142	SG Chapter 33			
	143	SG Chapter 34			
	144	SG Chapter 35			
	145				
Week 3	146	SG Chapter 36			
	147	SG Chapter 37			
	148	SG Chapter 38			
	149	SG Chapter 39			
	150				

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 4	151	SG Chapter 40			
	152				
	153	SG Chapter 41			
	154				
	155	SG Chapter 42			
Week 5	156	SG Chapter 43			
	157				
	158	SG Chapter 44			
	159				
	160	SG Chapter 45			
Week 6	161	SG Chapter 46			
	162				
	163	SG Chapter 47			
	164				
	165	SG Chapter 48			
Week 7	166	SG Chapter 49			
	167				
	168	SG Chapter 50			
	169				
	170	SG Chapter 51			

Week	Day	Assignment	Due Date	✓	Grade
Week 8	171	SG Chapter 52			
	172				
	173	SG Chapter 53			
	174				
	175	SG Chapter 54			
Week 9	176	SG Chapter 55			
	177				
	178	SG Comprehension Exam			
	179	SG Essay Assignment			
	180				
			Final Grade		



The Swiss Family Robinson

by Johann Wyss

Introduction

What could be more exciting than a book about a family filled with hunting, building, scavenging, designing, and inventing, all on a deserted island? And there is more as well. *The Swiss Family Robinson* is filled with all different kinds of plants and animals that provide opportunities for the family to take dominion of their small island.

The Swiss Family Robinson has entertained young people since its first publication in 1812. The book presents the story of a family seeking to survive on a deserted island in the Pacific after a shipwreck.

Historical Background

The Swiss Family Robinson was written by a Swiss pastor named Johann Wyss. Wyss originally wrote these stories to entertain and instruct his sons. Wyss had four sons and modeled the family in the book after his own family (a father, mother, and four sons).

The original title of the book was *Der Schweizerische Robinson*. The German title, when translated into English, is *The Swiss Robinson*. The meaning of the original title was not to indicate the name of the family (as Robinson), but rather to indicate that Wyss' story was the Swiss version of Robinson Crusoe retold with a family rather than a single individual on the island.

Wyss created the story to instruct his sons in Christian faith and practice, and to show them the value of hard work, diligence, and cooperation. Wyss also used the story to instruct his children in the natural sciences by speaking about the various uses of things in the created order such as the various plants and animals that the family meets on the island.

The Swiss Family Robinson has gone through many editorial revisions over the centuries. One of the most popular English versions was translated by William H.G. Kingston. Kingston's edition was based off the popular French revision by Isabelle de Montolieu. Montolieu's version added additional elements to the story that are now included in most modern editions of *The Swiss Family Robinson*. Montolieu's additions include the episode with the lions and the boa constrictor.

The edition used with this course is based off the Kingston translation with some additions from the original narrative, contained in William Godwin's 1816 translation of the book. Godwin's translation of the book is the only English edition that closely follows the originally published version of *The Swiss Family Robinson*. As a pastor, Wyss included much biblical instruction to his children. Some of these portions of the story were removed in later editions. We have reintroduced some of these elements of the story back into the narrative.

Literary Features

The Swiss Family Robinson is part of the larger genre of “Robinsades” (desert island stories in the vein of *Robinson Crusoe*). Wyss patterned his story around the basic features of Daniel Defoe's famous story. The story involves a shipwreck, a family on a deserted island, and extended narratives where the family works to find provisions and lodging on the island.

However, there are a number of differences between *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Swiss Family Robinson*. These include:

- In *Robinson Crusoe*, the character is alone on the island. In *The Swiss Family Robinson*, the family is together, and able to help one another with the effort to survive on the island.
- In *Robinson Crusoe*, the character believes his desertion on the island was brought about by God's judgment. The narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* consists of many episodes where Robinson Crusoe seeks the face of God for mercy. In *The Swiss Family Robinson*, the family sees their shipwreck on the island, not as God's judgment, but as part of God's providential purposes.
- In *Robinson Crusoe*, the character faces numerous difficulties and challenges on the island. Nothing comes easy for Robinson Crusoe. But in *The Swiss Family Robinson*, almost all of the projects that the family undertakes are successful.

Most of *The Swiss Family Robinson* consists of various discourses between members of the family as they explore the island. The father and the mother serve as central characters in the story, who regularly instruct their children. Father is constantly teaching and training his boys as they work together. Father and mother serve as the “mentors” to their children as they train them in numerous practical lessons.

Major Themes

There are numerous themes in *The Swiss Family Robinson* that regularly reappear. These themes contain important applications for the reader to consider.

The blessings of hard work

The family is constantly working together on some new project. From the very beginning of the story, father, mother, and the boys work together to find the provisions they need to survive. As they work diligently together on building a home in the trees, a staircase, or a boat, they find that disciplined labor brings about a reward. The family is well provided for as they diligently work with their hands.

*He who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich. (Proverbs 10:4)*

The value of God's creation

The family in *The Swiss Family Robinson* is constantly supplied by the natural resources of the island. They are able to find all different kinds of food and all different kinds of material to use for clothes and lodging. Throughout the story, father and mother instruct the boys on how to use what God has provided in nature for man's benefit.

The family takes dominion of the island by harnessing the natural resources that God provided and wisely using them towards various ends to provide food, clothing, tools, lodging, and more.

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. (Genesis 1:28-30)

The Importance of Loving Cooperation and Teamwork

The family constantly benefits by working together on various projects. Projects are more quickly and easily accomplished as the family works together. The Bible teaches the importance of loving cooperation and teamwork. Ecclesiastes 4 speaks of the value of friends and companions.

*Two are better than one,
Because they have a good reward for their labor.
For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.
But woe to him who is alone when he falls,
For he has no one to help him up.
Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm;
But how can one be warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.
And a threefold cord is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)*

About the Author

Johann Wyss (1743-1818) was a Swiss pastor who lived in Bern, Switzerland. As a pastor in his day, Wyss was one of the most well-educated men in Swiss society. The father in this story is modeled after Wyss himself, and demonstrates a knowledge of many different subjects, and an interest in learning in a variety of disciplines. Wyss never wrote any other books, but is forever remembered as the author of *The Swiss Family Robinson*. The book was published through the editorial efforts of his son, Johann Rudolf Wyss.

Chapter 1

Summary

The family is shipwrecked on an island in the Pacific Ocean. They are abandoned by the other sailors. The family sets up camp on the island and begins to forage for food.

Words to Know

1. **Tempest**—a violent windy storm
2. **Conjecture**—an opinion or conclusion formed on the basis of incomplete information
3. **Tumult**—confusion or disorder
4. **Composure**—the state or feeling of being calm and in control of oneself
5. **Gallant**—(of a person or their behavior) brave; heroic
6. **Indolent**—wanting to avoid activity or exertion; lazy
7. **Sundry**—of various kinds; several
8. **Wince**—give a slight involuntary grimace or shrinking movement of the body out of or in anticipation of pain or distress

Vocabulary Exercises

Use each word in a sentence of your own construction.

1. Tempest

2. Conjecture

3. Tumult

4. Composure

5. Gallant

6. Indolent

7. Sundry

8. Wince

Study Questions

1. Who is the narrator of this story?

2. How did the father comfort his sons in the midst of the storm?

3. What happened to the other sailors?

4. What did the family use to launch the escape raft?

5. What were the names of the two dogs? What breed of dog were they?

6. What did the family do immediately upon reaching land?

7. What animal did Fritz think he had caught? What kind of animal was it instead?

8. What did the suddenness of the sun setting indicate about the location of the island?

Meditation and Application

Throughout the family's trial as they were shipwrecked and began to establish themselves on the island, how did they see the hand of God in these events? Read Psalm 107:6-8. What should we do when the Lord delivers us?
