

# Series: Family of Light

## Session Title: The Noah Virus

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_

### Materials Needed:

- ☐ DVD copy of *Bruce Almighty* (for Lead In One)
- ☐ A squirrel picture or toy (for Lead In Two)
- ☐ A stick (for Lead In Two)
- ☐ Envelopes
- ☐ Strips of paper cut from page A44
- ☐ Double-sided copies of pages A45-46
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Transparency of page A46
- ☐ Overhead projector and overhead pens (optional)

### Lesson Objectives:

As a result of this lesson students will be able to...

- Identify the consequences of and the reasoning behind human free will.
- Identify the impasse created by God's purposes and the reality of human free will. (Our wilful sinfulness blocks the perfect purpose of God)
- Identify God's unique solution to this impasse: the introduction of a unique family of providential ambassadors (God injects "the Noah Virus")
- Identify themselves as members of this strategic light giving group.

**Leader Note:** There are once again two options for a Lead In to this lesson. You can do one or both.

### Lead In Possibility One:

There is a scene in the movie *Bruce Almighty* where Bruce attempts to use his supernatural powers to get his girlfriend to love him but she decides not to. No matter how hard he tries, Bruce's divine powers do not allow him to over-ride free will. This results in a discussion between him and God about free will. This introduces one of the most complicated theological truths of Christianity: the self-imposed limitation of God. God could over-ride free will, but he chooses not to because God is love and love must be an act of free-will.

Before playing the clip, tell students that you are going to play a film clip and that they must identify what is the limitation of divine power according to that clip.

### Lead In Possibility Two:

A mini drama.

This drama is similar to last session's. Ask a student volunteer to play God. Ask this student to select a friend from three predetermined options:

- a. A squirrel (use a picture, a stuffed toy, etc.)
- b. A laptop (you should be able to find one of these)
- c. A human (ask a leader ahead of time to volunteer in this role)

Tell the student that they must choose one of the options whom they believe would make a loving friend and partner in ministry. After they have chosen, have the student volunteer give three reasons why s/he chose the partner s/he did and three reasons why s/he didn't choose the other options.

Leader Note: the obvious choice is the human but that doesn't mean that your goofy student volunteer will make that choice. Have the youth group vote on the most appropriate (really...not just a joke) friend and partner if the volunteer chooses the squirrel or laptop (you may want to suggest counselling later).

Now that you have determined that the human is the obvious choice for a friend and partner, put some kind of handcuffs on the human (the military uses those plastic tie-down things...they work well). Tell the human volunteer that they s/he is now the student volunteer's friend. Now provide the student volunteer (God) with a stick. Tell God that if the friend becomes unruly or says something contrary to God's liking or desire, that God can beat her/him. If "human" doesn't love you back, beat with a stick. If human doesn't want to go on a graveyard tour with you, beat with stick.

Leader Note: prevent student volunteer (God) from actually hurting "human". The goal is to prove a point, not create a lawsuit or injure our poor volunteer.

Now ask the entire group to summarize God and human's experiences of this relationship in one word each. For example, for God, the relationship is boring and for human, the relationship is painful.

Transition by inviting the students to look further into the issue of free will or by asking them to guess what the main concern of the lesson will be.

## Part One:

Divide the group into smaller groups. Give each small group an envelope with strips of paper in it. On each strip of paper, put one concept from the logical chain found on page A44. Tell the groups that the goal is to put each one of the concepts into a logical chain that teaches us about the reality of human free will and its consequences. The strips follow a linear order.

Once the groups have completed the task, ask one representative from each group to stand up. Instruct the standing representatives to rotate clockwise one group. Have the representative compare the answers from his or her original group to the answers of the new group.

After this has happened, choose one group to share its answers. Check if you and the other groups agree so that everyone has a correct version of the logic flow chart in their group.

At this point you could summarize the task by saying something like this: *the reality is that for God to create a world with true love and real relationships, he had to establish the reality of real choice.*

Ask the question of the entire group: What do you believe was the greatest risk that God was taking in creating a world where humanity had the free will to choose to do good or evil? You could transition with this kind of content:

*That's correct! The risk that God took was that humanity could choose to love him or not love him and could choose to do good or do evil. Unfortunately after Adam and Eve chose to sin, conditions only grew worse. Humans chose to both ignore God and to become exceedingly evil. In Genesis 6:5-6 we read,*

*The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.*

*God was deeply troubled and regretted creating humanity. Humanity had sunk to terrible levels of sinfulness and evil. Adam and Eve's son Cain had killed his brother Abel. Only a few generations after that, murder became something that a man named Lamech wrote a song about. He celebrated murder and sang about it, like a gangsta rapper.*

*The sin and evil in the world was actually the result of God choosing love. God refused to dominate or force people to love him. But in choosing love, God had to allow humanity a choice. The choice that we humans made was to reject God and live in total opposition to him. At this point God had a choice. He could stew in his own regret, wipe out all of humanity like a bad experiment, or inject a code-correcting virus that would allow people to have a model of what it means to live according to God's purpose.*

*Let's read the story about that code-correcting virus that God injected into humanity!*

## Part Two:

Invite the group representatives to join their new group for the next task. Distribute pens and double-sided copies of pages A45-46 to every group. Instruct the groups to answer the questions found on the back of the page. The first page is a summary of the Noah story which they can use to help them answer the questions. The story of Noah is very long (over four chapters of Scripture), which is why it has been summarized for their use.

After the groups have finished, refocus their attention for feedback. A reliable way to do this is to copy the questions onto a transparency and put them up on an overhead projector. Hand out overhead markers to different students and invite them to fill in the correct answers. Then have all of the students review the answers (and review them yourself) to see if there is any disagreement. As always, allow student to student feedback and discussion before jumping in with a final clarification or word of guidance. Alternatively, you can accomplish similar feedback orally.

## Part Three:

Give instructions like these:

*As we have just discovered through the story of Noah. God had a plan by which he would bring about a change to the original plan. He made a contract with Noah, promising to never cause another global flood. He would never again wipe out human kind, even when humans decided to sin like they did before the flood. To ensure that such sinfulness wouldn't grow or remain unchecked, God introduced the Noah virus: a code-correcting virus that rebooted all of earth. God injected a righteous family into the story, one that would live as an example and as ambassadors. God chose to inject light into this dark world. Those of us who are Christians are descendants of Noah. We are God's family and God's plan for the salvation of this planet. No pressure, but God's new plan is that you and I act as his light and his life on this planet. But just like things have been from the very beginning, this is a choice that we have to make!*

*In your small groups I would like you to work together to make the decision as to whether or not you would like to sign up to be God's ambassadors. Supposing you do decide to be ambassadors, jot these questions down (somewhere on their handouts is fine) and answer them together.*

1. What are five things you would like your friends and family to know about God?
2. What are five things you would like your friends and family to know about being a Christian?

3. As a group brainstorm one way in which you can act as a descendant of Noah, bringing light and life to the world around you by sharing the truth of God, and the joy of the Christian life with others....

If time permits, take up all three questions. What are the most common answers? What are the most unusual and creative answers?

Close in a prayer of dedication and commitment to the dreams and desires of the group to make an impact in the lives of their family and friends this coming week.