

Session 2 Handout

I. Introduction:

A. Thesis: The Bible presents one overarching story that reveals God's plan to have a world filled with people who worship Him as God.

B. Narrative Literature:

1. The essential element of story is the development of a plotline.
2. Episodic narrative is constructed by a succession of loosely connected incidents rather than by an integrated plot.
3. With dramatic plot, the events in a narrative are selected and arranged to emphasize a relationship of cause and effect.

C. Structural Elements:

1. Setting: provides the necessary background for understanding the events and details that occur within the story.¹
2. With the initial conflict, a problem is introduced that upsets the status of the setting.
3. Rising action: traces the activity of the protagonist to solve the problem created by the inciting incident. The narrative plotline is developed here.
4. Climax: major turning point in the narrative because the conflict and rising action reach a tipping point.
5. Resolution: tension in the narrative breaks and the philosophy or plan of both parties (protagonist and antagonist) are either vindicated or disproven.
6. Epilogue/dénouement: results of the victory that re-establish the purpose of the protagonist are found.

¹Ryken, *How to Read the Bible as Literature* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1985), 35.

II. Biblical Story:

A. Setting: Genesis 1–2

1. The LORD God created the heavens and the earth and all things in them.
2. Mankind ruled over God's creation from the Paradise of God as God's representative.
3. Mankind lived in perfect harmony with God, under His blessing.
4. There was no death, no fear, no shame.
5. The tree of life was present and a river went out that watered the earth.

B. Initial Conflict: Genesis 3

1. The antagonist is introduced.
2. Adam and Eve disobey God and suffer a reversal of God's order.
3. Judgment is pronounced.
4. God announced His plan to restore His created order.

C. Rising Action: Genesis 4 – Passion Week of Christ

D. Climax: The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ

E. Resolution: Revelation 19–20

F. Epilogue: Revelation 21–22

1. Mankind ruling over God's creation, from the Paradise of God as God's representative.
2. Mankind living in perfect harmony with God, under His blessing.
3. No death, no fear, no pain.
4. Tree of Life and a river that goes out to water the earth are present.

III. Principles and Application:

- God is sovereign and in control of history.
- God will do exactly what He said He will do.
- Every worldview seeks answers to questions such as “What is reality? Who are we? Why are we here? What’s wrong? What’s the remedy?” (*Walsh and Middleton, The Transforming Vision*, 35).
- The worldviews that answer those questions are shaped by stories.
- We take our identity and sense of meaning and purpose from our worldview.
- The Biblical story is the one true metanarrative that stands in authority over all other rival narratives.²
- In a world that is not what it was and not what it will be—while the majority of mankind is in rebellion against God—we are privileged to ascribe honor and glory to Him by believing and obeying His word.
- While we desperately long for the coming of Christ, we do so with absolute confidence!
- Those who hear the biblical story are left with a choice as to whether they will embrace the promises of God concerning the promised Savior and ultimately reign with Him or reject His Word and face the judgment that has already been pronounced.

¹ Michael Matthews. *Is There a Reader of This Text* (Unpublished Dissertation, Canterbury Christ Church University & Trinity Theological Seminary, 2016), 85-86.