X.F. How to Deal with Narrative

How do I understand stories?
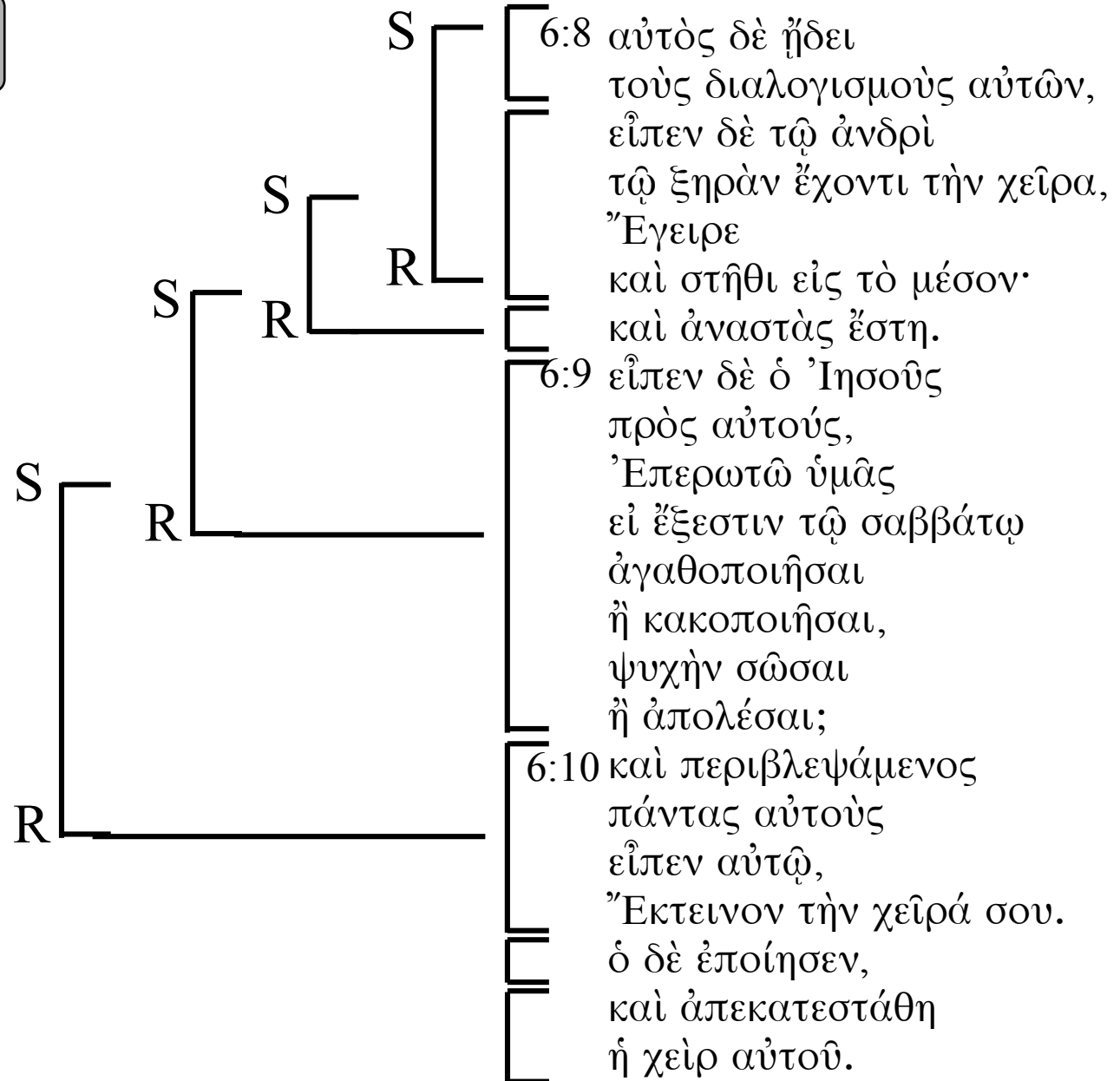
What Does Bracketing Analysis Do with Narrative?

Analyzing Luke 6:6-11

brackets?

S ⎡ S ⎡ 6:8 αὐτὸς δὲ ᾔδει
τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν,

S ⎡ R ⎡ εἶπεν δὲ τῷ ἀνδρὶ
τῷ ξηρὰν ἔχοντι τὴν χεῖρα,
Ἔγειρε
R ⎣ καὶ στῆθι εἰς τὸ μέσον·
καὶ ἀναστὰς ἔστη.

6:9 εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς
πρὸς αὐτούς,
Ἐπερωτῶ ὑμᾶς
R ⎣ εἰ ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ
ἀγαθοποιῆσαι
ἢ κακοποιῆσαι,
ψυχὴν σῶσαι
ἢ ἀπολέσαι;

S ⎡ 6:10 καὶ περιβλεψάμενος
πάντας αὐτοὺς
εἶπεν αὐτῷ,
Ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου.
R ⎣ ὁ δὲ ἐποίησεν,
καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη
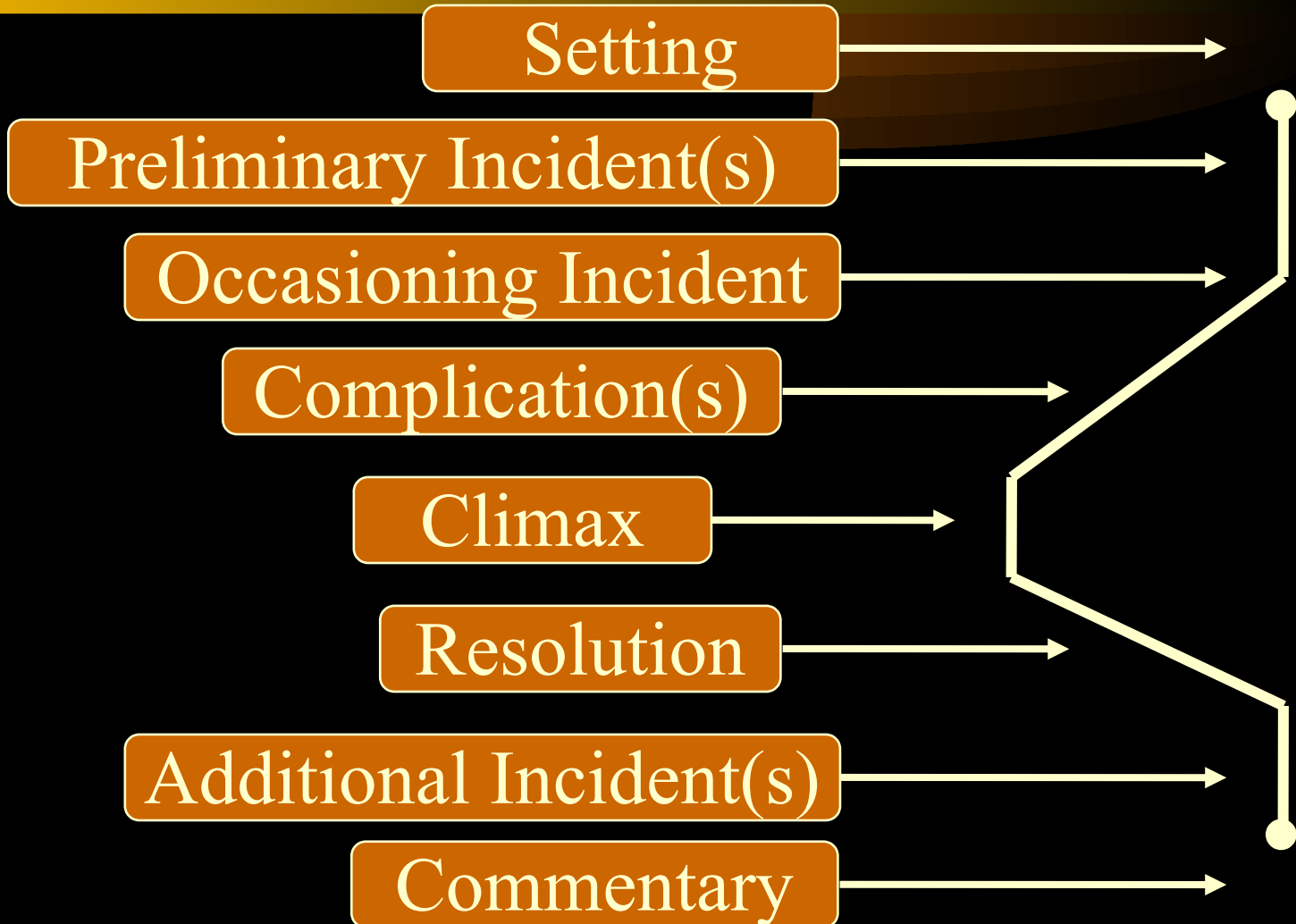ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ.

Analyzing Luke 6:6-11

brackets?

rise

TENSION

fall

6:8 αὐτὸς δὲ ᾔδει
τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν,
εἶπεν δὲ τῷ ἀνδρὶ
τῷ ξηρὰν ἔχοντι τὴν χεῖρα,
Ἔγειρε
καὶ στῆθι εἰς τὸ μέσον·
καὶ ἀναστὰς ἔστη.
6:9 εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς
πρὸς αὐτούς,
Ἐπερωτῶ ὑμᾶς
εἰ ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ
ἀγαθοποιῆσαι
ἢ κακοποιῆσαι,
ψυχὴν σῶσαι
ἢ ἀπολέσαι;
6:10 καὶ περιβλεψάμενος
πάντας αὐτοὺς
εἶπεν αὐτῷ,
Ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου.
ὁ δὲ ἐποίησεν,
καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη
ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ.

Main Points in Tension

Setting

Preliminary Incident(s)

Occasioning Incident

Complication(s)

Climax

Resolution

Additional Incident(s)

Commentary

Common Rhetorical Subdivisions in a NARRATIVE Episode

Vern S. Poythress

The following categories are defined using slightly modified versions of the definitions in John Beekman.

SETTING. Setting is composed of statements about static facts, location, time, circumstances, or movement in location. Usually such information comes at the very beginning of a new episode.

PRELIMINARY INCIDENTS. Preliminary Incidents are events (not descriptions of static states of affairs) relevant to what follows, but before the problem or tension has been introduced into the episode.

OCCASIONING INCIDENT. The Occasioning Incident is the event which introduces notable conflict or tension. In the nature of the case, there is seldom more than one such incident.

COMPLICATION. Complication is an event increasing tension, making a solution (apparently) more difficult. There can be more than one paragraph devoted to complications of various kinds. (Unlike the Occasioning Incident, Complication can and often does occur more than once in a single episode.)

CLIMAX. Climax is the incident of maximum conflict or tension. It is where, in a melodrama, one would expect the music to play the loudest.

RESOLUTION. Resolution is the event or events which solve the problem, release the tension, and unravel the tangles—or at least they contribute toward the solution.

ADDITIONAL INCIDENTS. An Additional Incident is a further event that is a consequence of the climax or resolution, but is not a significant part of the climax or resolution itself.

COMMENTARY. A Commentary contains the narrator's comments on, evaluation of, or moral for the story. Unlike Additional Incidents, it does not contain events continuing the straight line of the narrative.

More Narrative Labels

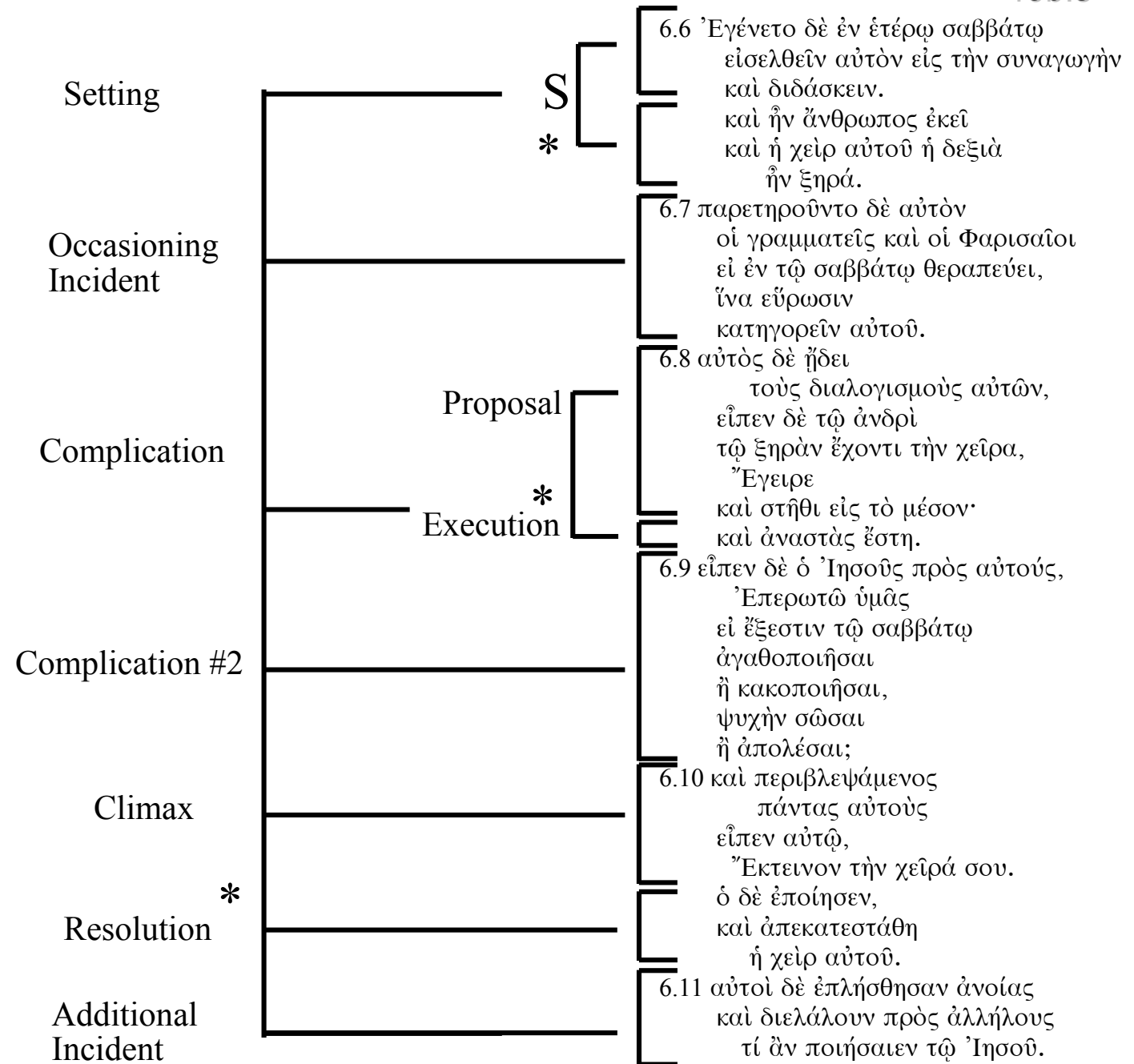In addition to the above, we often find a second simple pattern, composed of the following two units.

PROPOSAL. A description of action commanded, planned, or suggested.

EXECUTION. The carrying out of action previously described in a Proposal.

Doing Rhetorical (Flow) Analysis of Narrative

Luke 6:6-11

6.6 Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ἑτέρῳ σαββάτῳ
        εἰσελθεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν
        καὶ διδάσκειν.
        καὶ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ
        καὶ ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ ἡ δεξιὰ
            ἦν ξηρά.
6.7 παρετηροῦντο δὲ αὐτὸν
        οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι
        εἰ ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ θεραπεύει,
        ἵνα εὕρωσιν
        κατηγορεῖν αὐτοῦ.
6.8 αὐτὸς δὲ ᾔδει
            τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν,
        εἶπεν δὲ τῷ ἀνδρὶ
        τῷ ξηρὰν ἔχοντι τὴν χεῖρα,
            Ἔγειρε
        καὶ στῆθι εἰς τὸ μέσον·
        καὶ ἀναστὰς ἔστη.
6.9 εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς αὐτούς,
            Ἐπερωτῶ ὑμᾶς
        εἰ ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ
        ἀγαθοποιῆσαι
        ἢ κακοποιῆσαι,
        ψυχὴν σῶσαι
        ἢ ἀπολέσαι;
6.10 καὶ περιβλεψάμενος
            πάντας αὐτοὺς
        εἶπεν αὐτῷ,
            Ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου.
        ὁ δὲ ἐποίησεν,
        καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη
            ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ.
6.11 αὐτοὶ δὲ ἐπλήσθησαν ἀνοίας
        καὶ διελάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους
            τί ἂν ποιήσαιεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Luke 6:6-11

Setting — S

6.6 Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ἑτέρῳ σαββάτῳ
εἰσελθεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν
καὶ διδάσκειν.

*

καὶ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ
καὶ ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ ἡ δεξιὰ
ἦν ξηρά.

Occasioning Incident

6.7 παρετηροῦντο δὲ αὐτὸν
οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι
εἰ ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ θεραπεύει,
ἵνα εὕρωσιν
κατηγορεῖν αὐτοῦ.

Complication

Proposal

6.8 αὐτὸς δὲ ᾔδει
τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν,
εἶπεν δὲ τῷ ἀνδρὶ
τῷ ξηρὰν ἔχοντι τὴν χεῖρα,
Ἔγειρε

*

Execution

καὶ στῆθι εἰς τὸ μέσον·
καὶ ἀναστὰς ἔστη.

Complication #2

6.9 εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς αὐτούς,
Ἐπερωτῶ ὑμᾶς
εἰ ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ
ἀγαθοποιῆσαι
ἢ κακοποιῆσαι,
ψυχὴν σῶσαι
ἢ ἀπολέσαι;

Climax

6.10 καὶ περιβλεψάμενος
πάντας αὐτοὺς
εἶπεν αὐτῷ,
Ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου.

*

Resolution

ὁ δὲ ἐποίησεν,
καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη
ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ.

Additional Incident

6.11 αὐτοὶ δὲ ἐπλήσθησαν ἀνοίας
καὶ διελάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους
τί ἂν ποιήσαιεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Steps in Analyzing Narrative

- Pick a single chunk.
  - Unit with narrative unity.
- Break up into individual events.
  - Propositions or small clusters of propositions.
- Unite into groups with single actor.
- Determine climax and resolution.
  - Label with tree branches.
- Work back to determine other key events.
  - Complete the tree.

Do It!

Luke 7:11-17

11 Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἑξῆς
ἐπορεύθη εἰς πόλιν καλουμένην Ναΐν,
καὶ συνεπορεύοντο αὐτῷ
οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὄχλος πολύς.

12 ὡς δὲ ἤγγισεν τῇ πύλῃ τῆς πόλεως,
καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐξεκομίζετο
τεθνηκὼς μονογενὴς υἱὸς τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ,
καὶ αὐτὴ ἦν χήρα,
καὶ ὄχλος τῆς πόλεως ἱκανὸς ἦν σὺν αὐτῇ.
13 καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὴν ὁ κύριος
ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ’ αὐτῇ
καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ,
Μὴ κλαῖε.
14 καὶ προσελθὼν
ἥψατο τῆς σοροῦ,
οἱ δὲ βαστάζοντες ἔστησαν,
καὶ εἶπεν,
Νεανίσκε, σοὶ λέγω, ἐγέρθητι.
15 καὶ ἀνεκάθισεν ὁ νεκρὸς
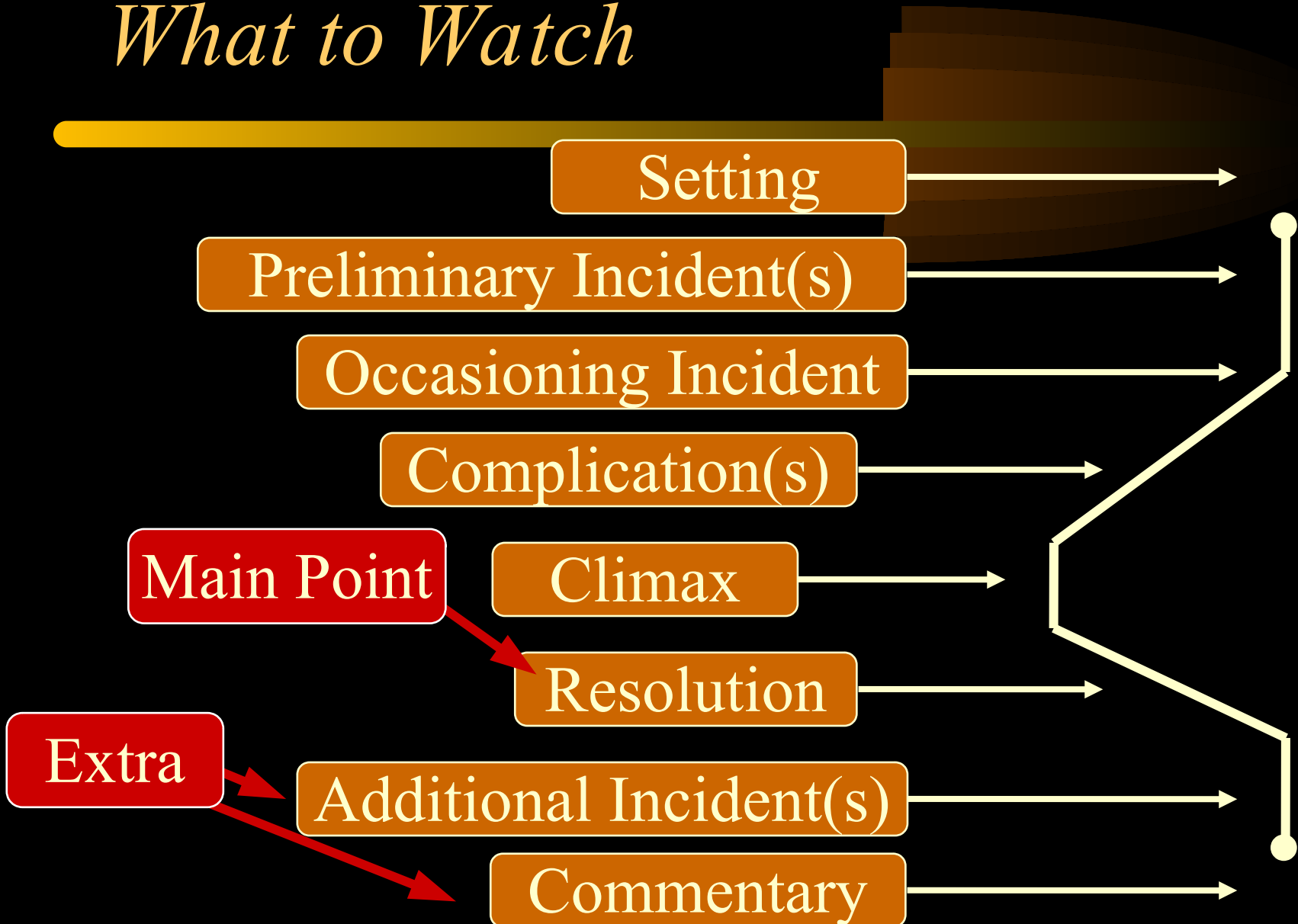καὶ ἤρξατο λαλεῖν,
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὸν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ.
16 ἔλαβεν δὲ φόβος πάντας,
καὶ ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεὸν
λέγοντες ὅτι
Προφήτης μέγας ἠγέρθη ἐν ἡμῖν,
καὶ ὅτι
Ἐπεσκέψατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ.
17 καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ λόγος οὗτος
ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ περὶ αὐτοῦ
καὶ πάσῃ τῇ περιχώρῳ.

What to Watch

Setting

Preliminary Incident(s)

Occasioning Incident

Complication(s)

Main Point

Climax

Resolution

Extra

Additional Incident(s)

Commentary

Unusual Forms

- Plots with missing pieces: Luke 13:6-9
- Matt 4:1-11
- Ask why?
- Plots with subplots: Matt 4:1-11
- Matt 9:18-26
- Tragic plots (antiredemptive): Gen 3

Plot and Character

- Tension goes with <u>plot</u>.
- Watch <u>character</u> as well.
- Characters play various <u>roles</u>.
  - Maybe more than one role at different times.
  - Interact with people in other roles.
- Characters develop.
  - Maturing or degenerating.
  - Reader grows in perception of character.

Redemptive Plots

- The heart of redemption lies in Christ
- Miniredemptions: redemptive plots
- Plots as types
  - Typology should include plot typology
  - as well as things, institutions, and events

Antiredemptive Plots

- Curse is antiredemption
- Adam's fall is the pattern
- The curse on Christ (crucifixion)
- Hell
- Miniantiredemptive plots

Are Plots Invented?

- History is not bare events
- Plot reflects God's design
- Human stories are selective
- Human stories may distort