Preaching and Spiritual Leadership

**The Homiletical Plot Form for Sermon #2**

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“Most of the time . . . good sermon form results from careful thinking and planning in advance. Good sermon form is an artistic achievement, and no universally accepted and always reliable process exists for creating a satisfactory sermon form” (Thomas Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 106).

While there are many effective sermon forms available, you will practice Eugene Lowry’s “homiletical plot form” for Sermon #2 (a topical sermon). In *The Homiletical Plot,* Lowry defines it as the narrative plot and explains it as follows:

“Because a sermon is an event-in-time—existing in time, not space—a process and not a collection of parts, it is helpful to think of sequence rather than structure. I propose five basic sequential stages to a typical sermonic process—a plot which may be visualized in the following way:”[[1]](#footnote-1)



For Sermon #2, please write down one or two sentences in each stage:

1. **Oops! (Upsetting the equilibrium)**: The sermon introduction to make the listeners engage in the sermon theme, by addressing “some kind of conflict or tension” embedded in your sermon topic.
2. **Ugh! (Analyzing the discrepancy)**: The presentation of “the central ambiguity the sermon seeks to resolve,” by probing and analyzing the complexity of the issue.
3. **Aha! (Disclosing the clue to resolution)**: The suggestion of “the clue to resolution” that directs toward “the radical change” (a reversal) in understanding the issue at stake.
4. **Whee! (Experiencing the gospel)**: The proclamation of the gospel “as event,” “not merely to say words but to effect a deed.”
5. **Yeah**! **(Anticipating the consequences)**: The sermonic conclusion that “makes solution now possible,” rather than “solve the issue,” by inviting the listeners to “a new freedom to make choices [they] could never before make.”

1. Eugene Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)