THE ORIGIN STORY – GENESIS 1-12

WEEK 2 – GENESIS 4 – CAIN AND ABEL

As you begin, consider your overall thoughts so far in reading these early parts of Genesis. How have you encountered these chapters as a story which *grasps* you; a narrative landscape in which to find yourself? What has resonated with you? What has confronted you?

Read Genesis 4.

Consider how Cain is born as a gift from God. We are now in a “fallen world” in the story. God’s good gifts still come, God’s good call still applies, even in the midst of brokenness. Is that something that you can relate to?

Consider how Cain and Abel bring offerings to God as an act of worship. Will, in his talk, raised the question of “What do we think worship is?” and offered two thoughts: It is about 1) devotion and adoration, and 2) service and offering of self. What are your thoughts about what worship is?

Will also offered some thoughts about the difference between Cain & Abel’s offering; they are both acts of thankfulness, an offering of the fruit of their hands. Abel’s offering also further represents his reliance on God, it is an offering of himself in some way. Imagine yourself as an observer to their offerings: what do you see and hear, what do you imagine are Cain & Abel’s thought processes and feelings?

Cain is angry and God dialogues with him. What part of God’s speech impacts you the most, either positively or negatively? What does the exhortation about sin “crouching at the door” say to you?

There is violence in this story. Abel is murdered. There is blood in the ground. How does this picture help us find ourselves in our own landscape and history in which there is violence and war?

There is grace in this story. Will spoke of the cycle of 1) God’s blessing (Cain & Abel’s fruitfulness), followed by 2) Human hard-heartedness (the anger and murder), followed by 3) God’s right judgement (Cain will wander the earth), followed by 4) God’s grace (God protects Cain). Can you see that cycle? How do you see God restraining violence even in this day and age? How does that inform how your pray for the places of war and violence in our own world?

Cain builds the first city. We live in a city, we live in its landscape. This story from Generous also shows us the landscape of God’s justice and grace interacting with human brokenness. In the end that grace takes us to the violence of the cross, and God’s gift of himself. How does this hope of reconciliation inform how we live as God’s people in our city?