

A shot heard round the world. That's what is said about the shot that killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand (June 28, 1914) and propelled Europe into World War I. On July 6 it will have been one year since the shooting of Philando Castile. The day that it happen my family and I were in Norway and we heard all about it. Granted word travels much faster then 103 years ago but it too was a shot heard round the world. Our traveling companions were from Australia, China, New Zealand, Malaysia, Canada and they were all talking about it with their families and friend back home but the shooting happened just blocks from where Heidi and I lived while I was in seminary, but while we were in Scandinavia it seemed very distant. There is no way this will connect to me personally is what I thought. There no way I'll know someone connected to the shot heard round the world, but I was wrong. My good friend Dan, his daughter works at J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School where Philando worked, she knew him well enough she was called as a character witness in the trial. Another friend of mine is a police officer and until we were back I had forgotten that he served with the St Anthony Police Department. I thought these things happen to other people, I wouldn't know them, they are people of different cultures I would have no connection to them. Maybe my head new better but my heart didn't want to believe I could be connected. I wanted to stay a safe distance from such devastation and uncertainty. As long as I could say I'm not connected, I didn't have to worry or get too concerned or get involved or get emotionally connected to either side.

Psalms 23 is a Psalm of Trust. Psalms of Trust are very similar to Psalms of Help. Both types depend on God

and request help from God and include expressions of trust. What differs is the overall mood. Psalms of Help strike a note of desperation and fear. Where Psalms of Trust—well they trust—they confess “I fear not, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff comfort me.” You can imagine that Psalms of Help are prayed from a first time crisis. Psalms of trust are words prayed for those who aren't riding in their first rodeo; they have been through the dark valley before. So, they trust—even though the dangers are very real.

Sometimes even in the same situation I pray both types of Psalms. At once I have a deep trust and fearlessness because of God is with me and then something happens or something changes in me and I switch to prayers for help. In order to get back to the trust I find I need something outside of me to reach me. Some times the Psalms themselves can do it. In breathing deeply and taking in the word and promise of God I am transformed. Kind of like a transformer does, not the cartoon robots, but the transformers that are apart of our electric grid, that reduce or transform down the voltage of wires. God's word transforms down my anxiety making it a usable level.

How does the Word of God function as we approach the anniversary of Philando Castile's shooting? Some folks have a great deal of anger and sadness. Some people don't want to talk about it—the trial happened Jeronimo Yanez was not guilty—case closed, it's done. Maybe the what scripture does, in both cases, is transform. In the case of over powering rage and frustration a Psalm of Help can move people into a place where they can focus

on next steps and how to change a system that **doesn't** meet their definition of just. And in the case of not wanting to talk about it—those folks can be met by scripture in a way that they are transformed up, given the needed voltage to address the difficult issues.

Revelation 22 says, “the angel of God showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with the twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations—healing of the **ethnos**.” One of the clearest pictures the Bible gives us of the Kingdom of God or heaven is this and it specifically notes the healing of cultural relations- **ethnos**. That all that is good of Baptists and Catholics and Lutherans and men and women and Blacks and Hispanics and Whites will be part of the Kingdom of God. Our work as Christians is the bringing about of the Kingdom of God, seeking to make the world more like God desires for us all. Our work as Christians is intercultural work.

This map is labeled with the year in which the demographics of the country most resembled the current demographics of that state. For example, the current makeup of Minnesota is very similar to what the nation looked like in 1974. Or Texas' makeup today resembles what the nation will be like in 2060. This map gives us a picture of reality. What is God communicating to us? “Even though I walk through the valley of deep darkness,” if this map makes you anxious about how the world is changing and how the world is and will be dramatically

different or if you look and feel frustrated about the lack of intercultural awareness or openness around you—the following words of Psalm 23 are true, “Your rod and your staff they comfort **me**.” God is calling us into God's future—a future in which God desires the healing of the nations/**ethnos**—and God is with us, drawing us into this future and walking with us. God is holding us. We are loved beyond understanding, not because of what we have done or will do; we are loved because we are, God is with us guiding us, assuring that goodness and mercy actively follows us all the days of our lives. It is this powerful love that fills us with joy and gratitude. It is the powerful love that turns us outside ourselves to see those around us. Look at these people here; Jesus love begs you to love them. Now close your eyes. Who are the people that are not here that Jesus love also begs you to love. The **Jesus'** love desires goodness and mercy for?