

Some of my White privileges

A while ago, a Black person whose work is in working for racial justice within a major Christian denomination suggested a good starting point for White people to begin their process of awareness and healing. Her suggestion is an essay entitled *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* written by a White female academic called Peggy McIntosh. You can see it on our website or via this link: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>

I have found Peggy McIntosh's essay, a list of things that she can take for granted, to be really helpful, especially now. It has inspired me to attempt my own list. These things are personal and particular to me, some of them are the same or similar to Peggy's. The list could be even longer. I offer these reflections in a spirit of us working through these issues in order to move forward towards racial justice. I believe it is vital for us all to consider how it is that this concept of race determines so much of how and by whom power is held in our society, in our churches.

Fourteen of the many things I can take for granted as a White male:

1. If I have accidentally cut someone up whilst I am driving, it is very unlikely anyone will refer to me as a "White So and So".
2. If I am late for an appointment, I am unlikely to be judged in terms of my skin colour or ethnicity.
3. When I raise the issue of racism, I am unlikely to be accused of playing the "race card".
4. I am aware that I have only ever been stopped by the police "randomly" when my passengers were young Black men.

5. Outside of a few church settings, I am very rarely the only White person in a meeting. When I have been the only White person, usually, I have been in charge.
6. When I accompany a Black person to an appointment with a healthcare professional or housing department, it is often me who gets asked the questions.
7. I have never been asked "But where are you from?"
8. I do not have to worry that my children will be stopped when out on the street.
9. I have never had to work extra hard to prove that I am worthy of the job because of my skin colour.
10. I have never been spat at or called any insult because of being White.
11. I have never been asked to speak on behalf of all people who happen to be seen as the same colour as me.
12. I have never been mistaken for someone else, eg. the cleaner or a manual worker, in a waiting room for a job interview.
13. When I go to the countryside or to a football match I know that almost everyone else there will be the same colour as me.
14. It is not usually a surprise to people when I am able to express myself in writing or verbally.

God bless.

Gerard

Reading Isaiah 58