Randy Frazee:

You're listening to the Bible Roots Podcast with Pastor Randy Frazee. If you're a church leader looking for creative ideas to help your church engage more deeply with the Bible, this podcast is for you. And now for today's episode.

Randy Frazee:

Welcome everyone to episode nine of the Bible Roots podcast. I am Randy Frazee, and I'm the host of this wonderful new show. This is a podcast that is devoted to the topic of Bible engagement. Why? Because Bible engagement is the number one catalyst for spiritual growth with no close second. I encourage you to check out episode one where we lay out this discovery and keep listening up to this episode, episode nine. And if you're a pastor or responsible for leading people spiritually through a small group, your family or even one-on-one coaching or discipling, this podcast is for you. And if you like it, leave a review and recommend it to somebody else that would get a lot out of this experience.

Randy Frazee:

Now, today, I promise you, is going to be a fascinating conversation. I am pleased to have Morgan Jackson as my guest today. Morgan is the senior Vice President of Faith Comes by Hearing, a ministry that focuses on getting the Bible to the remaining groups of people who do not have God's word in their own language. It is a fascinating work with a fascinating story and lots of implications for us today and moving forward. So whether you are getting a little exercise right now or cooking dinner, commuting to work are actually sitting down and watching the video version of this episode, I want to whisper a little prayer for you right now as we get started that God would reveal himself to you, what you're to hear today and what you're to do with what you hear today. In Jesus name, Amen.

Randy Frazee:

Morgan, welcome to the podcast.

Morgan Jackson:

Hey, thanks Randy. I've been looking forward to it.

Randy Frazee:

Yes. Let's start off just letting the audience know how, or at least your recollection on how we first met.

Morgan Jackson:

Well, it was one of those God things. As you know, we work internationally and in the US trying to get people in scripture and we've had a lot of success. But in recent years, everything's moved digitally. And I was struggling with how do we re-engage or engage the US church? And I was talking to Mike Sherrow, a good friend who is the head of C12, the CEO. And I was just saying, I just need some help, and we know what we do internationally, but I don't have it in the US. I need some help. And he said, "Have you ever met Dr. Randy Frazee?" And I went, "No." He said, "Well, he's the leading expert on scripture engagement in the United States and he's a good friend of mine. Let me introduce him." So he connected us by email, gave me your phone number, which I think he had permission to do.

Morgan Jackson:

I called you and you were in Mexico I think, and we had a conversation. And when the conversation was on, I felt good about it, but I didn't know if it was going to go anywhere until you called the next day and said, "I got woken up by God or God talked to me, and I think this is going to be more important than I thought. I'd like to come see you." And I said, "All right, bring your wife. Let's get together." And literally within two days you were on a plane and came to the ministry. So, that's how I remember the introduction.

Randy Frazee:

You told it exactly how I remember it as well. And I tell you, Morgan, I was certainly interested in your work and I was in Mexico. It wasn't a mission trip, it was a fun trip. And the connection we had was not super great where I was at. So I wasn't able to pick up everything, but I really felt like I did the right thing by making the connection, wasn't sure what I was supposed to do. Life's bit overwhelming. And I did not ask for this. I went to bed one night and woke up and I don't get these very often my life, Morgan. I woke up excited and a little nervous as well and I told my wife what had happened. She says, "You get on the phone. We don't want to be Jonah being thrown out a boat in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea because I'm in this boat with you."

Randy Frazee:

And so I called you up and you were gracious to have me out. And we have developed an incredibly meaningful relationship, which we're going to talk about a little bit today. So it's certainly a God thing. Would you give us the history of Faith Comes by Hearing just kind of a snapshot of just the history.

Morgan Jackson:

All right. It started with my folks in Southern California. My dad had come to faith in Christ as a young man in his twenties. He had been raised in a broken household. So he was in orphanages and foster homes until the time he was 12. My mom was orphaned. Her mother died when she was one and so was raised mostly by her grandfather until her father remarried. And so my mom had a Christian background, my dad had none and they got married. And when my dad came to faith in Christ, he didn't have any way to understand how to live. So he took the Bible and that was his textbook. Whatever it said he was doing. And he was managing an avocado packing house and he got given a book, Answers to Prayer by George Mueller. And as he read it, he just felt God challenged him to say, "That's what I want you to do."

Morgan Jackson:

Now, he had, in the evenings, got his pastoral license, started a little teeny church in our mountain community. And so he went to my mom and they said yes. And so they sold everything, lost money on it seems, and ended up with a 1955 school bus that they converted into a house car. And they moved four kids, my brother, 13 me, 12, my little brother, 11, my sister, nine. He converted it in. So he had bunk beds that folded down into couches. And they then lived by faith for 12 years. I lived in the school bus with him I think four or five years. And so they traveled around and never told anybody their need, wouldn't take an offering in a church. Started on the Navajo reservation and then a hippie community, the Christian farm, a Hopi village. And then the Lord directed them to Albuquerque in 1971.

Morgan Jackson:

And at that time, cassettes were just coming out and people had been sending them cassettes by Bill Bright, Chuck Smith, all these different, J Verna McGee. And they had been getting their spiritual lives fed off of these cassettes and they'd built a pretty big library of them. And so they felt the Lord wanted them to start a Christian tape library. They thought it was just a short term thing. They'd pass it off in Albuquerque and it was called Hosanna. Well, very quickly they found the audio Bible done by the American Bible Society, King James Revised Standard, Alexander Scourby. Many of you have those cassettes still. And they put them on cassette called the American Bible Society. They had done it for the blind, so it was never copyrighted. And we began to produce those, put them in the library.

Morgan Jackson:

Well, the ministry grew, but in the mid seventies my dad kept reading studies about how Christians were not reading the Bible. And so he began to say, "Hmm." He was going through the New Testament once a week reading it and he kept seeing Romans 10:17, "Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God." He thought, "I wonder if that's how I could prove that" because faith that works as dead. So he kind of created this little teeny survey measuring six areas, attendance, spiritual level, participation, baptisms, conversion attendance, counseling. And then he invited churches and to join and he said, "Listen, if you'll invite and get half of your people to listen through half of a tape a day," which would be going through their New Testament actually, "once a month for three months, I'll loan you all the cassettes you need for all of those people." And so we did and we had five churches, different denominations do it. And each one of them had revival.

Morgan Jackson:

Attendance went up, everything went up, but two areas, participation and spiritual level went way, way up. And then one area we weren't measuring, giving, went up dramatically. So we said, "Oh, we've got something!" And then we almost went bankrupt because we found out we couldn't loan all those cassettes out. My dad was a great visionary, but not even good businessman. So the next four years he went studying two to three business books a week. Meanwhile, my brothers and I were in Flagstaff, Arizona. Albuquerque wasn't our home, it was just the last dot on a map. So we're in Flagstaff. I'm running two businesses. I'm getting a business education for my dad as he's trying to study. He applies all those things, and then they begin to start selling the Bible on cassette to churches. They start taking that study and calling churches and saying, "Listen, we did this study, 80% of your people aren't reading the Bible but they will listen based on this study."

Morgan Jackson:

And at that same time, my mom had received a promise from somebody. Somebody felt like God gave them a scripture, a word for him that said, "When you enter the land, I will gather your sons across the river to the base of the mountain in the land God's given you." Well Albuquerque, the Rio Grand River, the Sandia Mountains and the ministry was in between the two. And my dad woke up one morning. They were living in a converted garage fixing up the bus to get back on the road because they'd almost gotten bankrupt. My dad was going to get out and he felt the Lord speak to him just like he did to you in that early morning and said, "No, you've entered the land. This is where I planted you."

Morgan Jackson:

So my mom heard that and said, "Okay God, you promised my sons." So my wife Mary feels uncomfortable, comes to me, something's wrong, something needs to be changed. So I go pray, and end of the day God tells me, and Mary, "You got to go back and help your dad." So sold the businesses, and each and one of my brothers within the next year felt God close doors and say, "Go back and work for your dad." At that time, they had only 12 people, they were barely making payroll. And then the ministry exploded.

Morgan Jackson:

And at that time what we were doing is just calling churches and saying, "80% of your people aren't in scripture. We had the audio New Testament on cassette, $12, 12 tapes, unconditionally guaranteed." And so we actually went through and called every church in America had 137,000 churches buy from us. We were selling almost a million New Testaments a year, but we were only getting 15 testimonies a year from that million people in 50,000 churches. And of course you wouldn't have been surprised by this because you're an expert in bible engagement and you would've told me, "Morgan, a tool will only get you 5%."

Morgan Jackson:

But we were caught up in the normal missions world of distribution equals impact, right? You just distribute, hand out a million tracks and one person pulls it out of the gutter and reads it comes to Christ. That's justification we're doing another million. So we were talking to a thousand pastors a day. So I had my team, 54 people, on the phone and I said, I want to know who's buying these cassettes. It was the pastors, the Sunday school teachers, the elders, it was the Bible readers. They were like, "Oh wow, I can listen in the car, I can listen while exercise." And the non bible readers were like, "Oh why would I do that? The Bible is boring. I can understand it."

Morgan Jackson:

And so we made a decision in 1987, we would not hire another person until we found a way to reach the 80% that weren't in scripture. So we spent four years on that journey and I wish you were with me during that journey, you would've helped me out. But after four years, we went from 246 staff down to 88 and we were just like, "We're going to go out of business because we're not making this work." But what we came out with, it's a program we call Faith Comes by Hearing. And that program was pastors would challenge the whole church to join them in listening through their New Testament in over 40 days.

Morgan Jackson:

We'd produced a drama. So they would play the dramatized recording on their PA and people would go, "Oh I can do that." And then we found that was the key. The pastor had to challenge, had to preach, had to invite and say, "I want every single one of you." The church I was going to had about 3000 members. And the pastor just said, "We'll take up an offering to cover the costs. So you just sign up." And they got 90% of the families to agree to make a pledge. They got all the cassettes, put them in the middle of the floor, two pallets, put them in everybody's hands. And then he said, "There's one interest to the church and I'm going to stand by the exit and when you go by me, I want to hear Matthew one as you leave."

Morgan Jackson:

And that was the thing of injecting. That's what we learned was to inject it into a normal routine that people are already doing. And he just asked, "How many of you spend some time in the car?" Well the average American spends 45 minutes. So he just said, "All I want you is just to put it in your car and listen, stop listening to music. Stop doing this and just listen to scripture." So every one of our cars became a Bible school over the next 40 days and 98% of the people completed it. I call him to say, "What were the testimonies? What were the transformations? So people, marriages heal, this, that."

Morgan Jackson:

And he gave me the statistics of how many people had completed it and how many people were still doing it because the evidence says 21 to 28 days form a habit. So I told him, "If you do it for this length of time, 40 days, a habit will be formed." And he said people are still listening. I think it was 94% were still listening after the 40 days. And so he said, "You told me the truth." But I was like, "What's the stories?" Because all the cards had stories on them. And he looked at me, he said, "Morgan, my problem's never been the power of God's word to change lives. My problem has been getting people in scripture. You told me if I preached, I challenged, I invited and encouraged people and followed up weekly that I'd get over 90% of my people to sign up and that they would listen and they'd form a habit. And what I'm telling you is that is true. God's word is changing lives. I don't need to read that. This was what was important to me."

Morgan Jackson:

So that started Faith Comes by Hearing in the United States and you would've saved me four years of agony if I had known you. And two thirds of my staff.

Randy Frazee:

It worked out really cool. And we'll shift gears in a little bit and talk about what's going on internationally and some of the stuff that's really just blowing the world up right now with what you guys are doing and the partnerships. And I wanted you to tell the bus story. I just enjoy it every time I hear it. It's that sort of rugged pioneer spirit of the early missionaries. It's a Hudson Taylor type of David Livingston kind of story. And just for our listeners, just how inspiring it is for someone to hear from God and believe in God and go all in for God. And then just a reminder of the power of the word and that we've just shown over and over again that the word, when it goes out, doesn't return empty, which is really cool.

Randy Frazee:

So Romans 10:17, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Talk a little bit about what you know. I've talked about it. We can kind of work on this together. Just the power of auditory learning. How many people are illiterate in the world? How many people prefer audio? Do you have those handy?

Morgan Jackson:

Yeah. And what happened is during this time, Randy, we didn't realize it, but our audio bibles were being passed around pastors and people were sending them to missionaries, Wycliffe Bible translators, Bible societies. And so as they were hearing them, we started getting calls from Wycliffe and Bible societies saying, "Hey, why are you doing this? Why are you recording the Bible for Spanish and English people in America? What about Haiti? 90% of people are illiterate." And so we started hearing from the translators that half of the world was functionally illiterate, couldn't read the Bible in their language.

Morgan Jackson:

The Wycliffe Bible translators were telling me that oftentimes it was less than 1% or 2% that could ever read scripture in their language. Sometimes only two handfuls. And I was in shock. They told me stories about distributing bibles and when they came back, the Bibles were missing all the pages. And they're saying, "Hey, where are the pages of the Bible?" And they said, "Well you told us, pastor, that man cannot live by bread alone and so we can't read. So we just tear a page out of the Bible, put it in the soup and we eat it." I was like, what? They were saying in Nigeria, they bought four bibles when they built a house and they put them under the cornerstone or in the cement because they couldn't read them, but if you build your house on God's word...

Randy Frazee:

You're taking it literally.

Morgan Jackson:

I had no idea. Then they informed us that even those who could read, 70% were oral. In fact, it's the same in the United States. I think only 20% or 30% of Americans read more than a book a year.

Randy Frazee:

Even though they can, they don't choose to. Yeah, this is a big deal for many of our listeners that are in urban areas where the people can read. But here's the wake up call. 70% of them are not choosing to read.

Morgan Jackson:

Yeah, my daughters read, but my son told me the other day, he read a book and I said, "You read it?" And he said, "Oh I've read it four times." And I said, "You read that book four times?" He went, "Okay, dad. Okay, dad. I listened to it on Audible." So I'm like, okay, for him reading is listening. So that was when we first began to be aware that the majority of the world, even when you got the Bible, couldn't read it. They were eating it. So we began to record it and that was when massive transformation happened.

Morgan Jackson:

Now, when you start looking at three and a half, 4 billion people who can't read, you start going, "Whoa!" You can't afford a printed Bible per person. How are you going to provide cassettes, batteries because they have no electricity and hundred dollars plus per person, ooh.

Morgan Jackson:

And so we started working with nationals and we started looking at the Bible. And wow, it's amazing to look at scripture and realize in the Old Testament, there was only one copy of the book of the law. And we think pastors preach, read your bible, pray every day, and they used the Old Testament but they only had one copy and they lost it during the time of Josiah. So the call was for the people, Deuteronomy 31:9-13, every seven years the whole nation was to assemble and hear the word God for an eight day feast, the five books the law. And we went, wow. So the great revivals, Josiah, Nehemiah, was when their book of the law was brought and heard by the whole nation. Then we looked at Jesus. Well, we have the writings of Jesus, but he wrote nothing down except for in the sand.

Morgan Jackson:

So we went, "Oh, his disciples were illiterate." 95% were during that time and when they stood before the Sanhedrin, and they said, "How'd these guys get such [inaudible 00:19:45] seeing as they were illiterate and unschooled?" So we went, wow. So we started saying, what if we provide one audio bible per community and our oral and our nationals said, "Hey, that's the way we work. We finish farming in the village. We all come together, fire, we tell stories. If you can provide one, we'll all gather together to listen." And that's when we just got blown away.

Morgan Jackson:

I remember going to my first village. You walk in the village, you have to meet with the elders. This is Ghana, West Africa. You got to meet with the chief and get permission. And we brought the word of God and the Ashante, your language. And they look at us and they go, "No, God doesn't speak Ashante, he only speaks English." Oh no, no, no, no. You pull it out, you push the button and out of it comes Ashante. And there's this shock. They just are shocked. And the chief yells at one of the guys "Go!" And he grabs a gong gong, goes through the whole village [inaudible 00:20:42]. Priesthood.

Morgan Jackson:

Every 300 plus people are sitting under the mango trees. Everybody gathered, bring it up, push the button, and it's like all sound is just gone. Nobody moves, nobody twitches for the next 45 minutes. And you look in their eyes and you realize they're not with you. And then when you stop the button, you watch people coming out of the story and you're going, "What's going on?" And it took me five years to understand that oral people cannot separate themselves from a story. When it's dramatized and it's in their language, they actually enter the story. And for them it's as real as if they were with Jesus, as if he was talking to them directly.

Morgan Jackson:

And when you stop, they're like, "Jesus speaks Ashante." Ah! We don't need a translator to... He's from among us!" And we were having communities where half the village would come to Christ after listening for 45 minutes. Missionaries had been in the area for 25 years and won five people. Hearing the word of God in their language. One time, half the village makes a decision for Christ. And I was shocked. I thought what we were doing was for discipleship. There's 3 million churches among the extreme poor. 99% of them can't read. So to have the Bible in their language would allow them to disciple their people. I had no idea that since everybody thought God only spoke another language, not their own, that the minute they heard it, the whole village would gather around the church to hear and people would come to faith in Christ from hearing the word of God.

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, that's such a great story. And just, Faith Comes by Hearing took this really radical shift, and you really focus particularly on audio recordings for groups of people that are still remaining. Wycliffe and others have taken care of some of the bigger languages. You guys are focusing on languages that have smaller groups of people. So I wanted you to explain two things. What's the process by which you do an audio recording? And then, if you could tell us, what do you do when you're going into a place that doesn't have a written language?

Morgan Jackson:

Well, the typical, we have 50 national teams. Over the years, we work in partnership and we work with nationals. So these national teams have equipment. They're two people, one a director, one an engineer. They will then go out to the area where Wycliffe Bible translator may have been for 35 years learning the language, creating a dictionary, orthography, and translating the scripture. And they know how many people cannot read. So they call us. That national team in Africa, they're Africans, go out to that jungle area on the river. They then use maybe the missionary's home or a church or a mud hut. They convert it into a studio, bring corn cob mattresses, put a door and a window in, bring a generator.

Morgan Jackson:

They find 25 voices that will do 180 voice parts. So the voice of Matthew, the narrator, will also be the blind man in in John, "Jesus! Son of David!" And then he'll be an angel in Revelation. "Whoa, whoa." And you use reverb, sound effects. So 25 voices gets us 180 voice parts. Now it takes 10 hours to get one hour because it's just these people don't read well. A lot of times they're illiterate people. They're reading to somebody in the studio and they're just mimicking. So six weeks to three months to do a New Testament, comes out to us, we add music and sound effects. And then when that's done, then we put them on these kind of devices, which is the Proclaimer, the Solar Panel. So they don't have to make a choice between food and batteries. The batteries recharge 3000 times. Africans said they love it because it drinks the sun. It speaks any language in the world, it never tires. It can say the same thing a thousand times and never changes it.

Morgan Jackson:

It can speak four languages. So we load it with usually one language but up to four languages. And so this one is loud enough that a thousand people can hear. Many of them prefer the smaller one that is in India and other places. The listening groups are 30, 40. It'll be used in four groups. And so this one, same thing, solar panel and then four languages, recharge.

Morgan Jackson:

Now, in places, Randy, where there's no scripture seed company Wycliffe and others came to us and said, "As you know, languages are in clusters." If you take Latin, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, all those languages are Latin based. So the orthography, the rules of the language, the words are the same or similar. So Dia and Spanish, Jia in Portuguese. So the rules are there and they're intermarried. So they're saying, " [inaudible 00:25:48], there's 28 languages. You already have 12 of them. If these other languages have never been translated, we're only going to translate it so you can record it because the people can't read and there's no never going to be any education in that language. Education's in Spanish. So let's skip that five years that it takes to learn the language, create an orthography and dictionary and let's just go oral to oral."

Morgan Jackson:

So we spent about eight years creating a software that we call Render because you're rendering it from one language to another. It can hold three languages and it's touch base. So it's all color and image based. So I literate people can use it without having to learn to read or operate a computer. So I've got a four year old granddaughter, and I watch her go through my wife's iPad. She can't read. So they are able to do that.

Morgan Jackson:

So what they do is they hear a section of scripture. Usually we have two teams of five. They'll be way up in the mountains on an island that's five days away from anybody that has electricity, any signal, they come together and in some area .they listen, talk about how they would say it, discuss it, and then they'll white paper or whiteboard it. They'll put a piece of white paper on and the story of the woman that gave the two pennies. They'll then draw the temple. They'll draw the rich people and the box, the woman, the two pennies, the 12 disciples. And so they literally draw out the story. Then the best person will record it, They'll listen to it, listen to the source text, listen to another text. No, no, no, we miss do it. And they'll do it 15 times. When they're done goes to the other team. The other team hears it, "Oh no, that was a borrowed work. You need to change it."

Morgan Jackson:

And they'll record what needs to be done, goes back and then they change it. Then they community check it. And this is the thing is people are coming to faith in Christ while they're translating because we're able to do Luke in nine months. Well, as each chapter is done, the whole village around them, and some villages will send people will gather around, the only light will be this little computer or device. Somebody's fighting over who's going to grind the coffee, who's going to roast the peanuts. And they all gather in the dark and they hear the word of God in their own language for the first time. And one of the Singas, who are doing this, the pastor who is explaining this says, "When we heard it in Singa, it's umbilical. And people will literally pound their chest and weep when they hear it because their heart hurts."It has impacted them so deeply. And then they talk about it and listen to it.

Morgan Jackson:

Now, that meaning check is important because one project, they were listening, they heard the story of John the Baptist. He came either eating or drinking and they said, "Oh." And so they asked, what does that tell you? They said, "Oh, John the Baptist was a powerful warlock." And I went, "Wait, wait, wait, what do you mean warlock?" "Oh, we have warlocks, and they hate somebody, they'll go out at night and release their spirit. And if they're powerful enough, they'll eat that person's soul. And when they wake in the morning, they're not hungry. And that person will die." No, no, no, no, no.

Morgan Jackson:

So they go back to the translation consultant who says, "Okay, change that to 'John the Baptist came fasting.'" Which they do, and they go, "Oh." So there's an important series. But now, instead of waiting 35 years, nine months, and even they're not waiting nine months. Within the first month, they're hearing one, two chapters of Luke, and people are coming to faith in Christ.

Randy Frazee:

That is absolutely amazing. Let me ask you, where are you guys at with how many languages do you have audio recordings for at least a portion of the Bible?

Morgan Jackson:

We have just over 1600 as of today, 1,602. Now those are big languages and little languages, so Mandarin and others. So that's 1,602 languages. There's 7,100 languages in the world. But that 1,602 represents about 85% of world speakers. So a little over 6.6 billion people speak that as a mother tongue.

Randy Frazee:

Hi, this is Randy Frazee, host of the Bible Roots podcast, which is brought to you by my friends at Harper Christian Resources. Harper Christian Resources equips you to understand the scriptures, cultivate spiritual growth and disciple your people with bible study resources from today's most trusted voices.

Morgan Jackson:

So we're really close to the numbers of people, but we're far away from the languages. So there's about another thousand languages that have at least a portion of scripture, another thousand that have New Testaments we're waiting to record. And then there's another 2000 languages that translators are working on. And then there's the 2000 languages that have nothing. And those are the ones we're doing the oral Bible. And as you know, we're all focused. All the translation world is focused on getting...

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, that's one of my big areas I wanted to spend some time with. So let's go there now because everything is pointing to this, finishing the task, this 2033 vision. And some people have heard about it, but for many people this is going to be something very new and what's happening in it. Tell us about 2033.

Morgan Jackson:

Well there's a group called Every Tribe, Every Nation that's now known as the Illuminations and Illuminations was business people, the Green family, the Barnharts and others who pulled together the top 10 Bible translation agencies in the world and said, "We don't want to know when you can start every language. We want to know when it's done." And they worked literally eight to 10 years with them getting the same language, getting all the research, getting shared data. And then about five years ago they said, ""When can it be done?" And as they did the research, they said, "We believe this could be done by 2033, 2000 years after Christ's death."

Morgan Jackson:

So they sent that to us, we looked at it, examined it, and we said, "Okay," because we're saying what are you going to do with the oral people? And they said, "Well, that's you. You guys are our partner, we're expecting you to step up." So we looked at it and we called that Vision 2033. Now, this is important because in Matthew 24 where the disciples were asking about when the end of time was coming, what was the signs, we talked about wars, pandemics, which I mean we're sitting in there, potentially World War III, and we're seeing all these wars pandemics, but he says the end is not yet.

Morgan Jackson:

In Matthew 24:14, he says, "Because the gospel of the kingdom must be preached to the whole world and to every nation, then the end will come." Now, the word nation there is the same word for nation used in the Great Commission and it's ethnos, which means language, tribe and people. So the Wycliffe Bible translators has said to us, "That's 7,140." So until every language has scripture in their language, we don't believe the job is done. So it's potential that by 2033 we can for the first time in the history of the world, have completed the Great Commission.

Morgan Jackson:

And at the same time there's these coalitions of church planters that have come together that are researching the world to see where churches are. And they have made an agreement by 2033 to plant through nationals a church within reach of every thousand people. So you have these colliding, the Holy Spirit is calling us all together. And you have to say, nobody declares that 2033 is when Christ returns. We don't know, but it may be for the first time in the history of the world where we can, on our knees, say, "Lord, we've got every language. Come get your bride. Come."

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, we're doing our part. And what's really amazing to me is the John 17 nature of this within the different Christian organizations that could be territorial and have, in history, been territorial and now God is moving and there's this amazing unity that's coming around it. And I think for people listening today, watching today, maybe hearing for the very first time this sort of, oh my God, Jesus did say that. We're not saying it's 2033, but boy, the 2033, 2000 years after, and it was around 2000 years when God first talked to Abraham. And so God's a mathematician. And so it was 2000 years before he came the first time. If you look at scripture, it seems like 2000 years before he comes back the second time, I don't know. Because sometimes you can think, "Wow, this is never going to happen." And people in the scriptures even got to that point says this thing's never going to happen.

Randy Frazee:

And so we pace in front of a microwave. So we just think if it doesn't happen by the end of the day in America, it's not going to happen. But really, you can see this sort of parallel and then the idea that we can participate and say, "God, you're going to come when you're going to come, but we're going to do everything we can." And the unity of the church has just been absolutely fascinating.

Randy Frazee:

What I want you to do, Morgan, I want you to tell a story. Everyone who knows you, and I forgot the one I want you to tell and maybe you want to pick a different one, but I like the genealogy story. Do you mind telling that one?

Morgan Jackson:

Oh, love to.

Randy Frazee:

Okay, so everyone just listen in. This is super eye-opening for those of you who teach and just those of you that are trying to connect with your people and wanting to know where they're at.

Morgan Jackson:

Well Randy, as I mentioned, I really didn't expect the audio Bible to be a tool of evangelism, but over the first five or six years, so many people were coming to faith in Christ that I began to ask the question whenever I travel, what was the story or stories that caused you to come to faith in Christ? And literally one out of three times people would say, "Oh, when I heard the genealogy, that's when I came to Christ." And I'm like, what?

Randy Frazee:

Matthew Chapter one, right?

Morgan Jackson:

Yeah. One people group in Togo told me that the power... "Oh, the genealogy is so powerful. We've created a song out of it and that's how we evangelize it. We go to a village, we sing the genealogy and then we invite people to come to faith." And I'm like, I don't get it. So I was in San Jose with some business guys, shared those stories. When I was done, this business guy came up to me really unhappy and he said, "You need to stop doing that. It may be funny to you, but the genealogy has no right."

Morgan Jackson:

Well, there was one African from Zimbabwe in the room and he jumped in to defend me. He was like, "No, no, the Genealogy's my favorite part of the Bible." And that guy looked at him like he had two heads. "You got to understand our culture in Africa. We don't care what school you went to, how wealthy you are. The only right you have to speak is based on your genealogy." And he says, "I'm the first born of my father who's the first born of his father, who's the first born of his. We're from a chieftain clan, a major tribe. And whenever there's a village or community event, we have to go back. And when we go in, the aunties of my father will sing our genealogy, teach all the women the genealogy, they'll greet us singing our genealogy lead us to the center of the village so everybody knows somebody of importance has come."

Morgan Jackson:

And all of a sudden I caught it because when I would see the genealogy play, Matthew one, in these villages, you would see people go dead quiet, leaning forward, and the people in the village would want to hear the genealogy two, three and four times, which I didn't understand. Well for them they're saying, "Who is this? Before I listen to them, I got to know his genealogy." Well when it says this is the genealogy of Jesus, the son of Abraham, the son of... I mean, they're immediately like Abraham, whether they're another religious background or Christian, everybody knows Abraham. So they lean forward. Goes 14 generations to David.

Morgan Jackson:

By that time the village is dead quiet. Then 14 generations from there to the Babylonian Exile. Now the quiet is palpable, then 14 generations to Jesus. Now nobody moves, nobody twitches because nobody in the history of their tribe has heard from somebody with the genealogy like this. And then a virgin gives birth to a child, John the Baptist comes screaming from the wilderness, "Repent!" And they know they're sent. And so when they get done with hearing the Sermon on the Mount, they are convicted and they want to know how do we enter into this kingdom? So the genealogy is what gives them the absolute authority to talk. So I'm like, that part that we skip over for two thirds of the world is the most important part of the Bible. That's why it leads.

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, I mean you've shared that story. I've taught that story to our congregation and everyone's just absolutely mesmerized by it. It makes so much sense. We'll have to do another episode because there's so many stories you tell. Probably maybe my all time favorite, but I'm not going to have you tell it now, I'm just going to let people realize they're going to have to go on your website, they're going to have to come to Faith Comes by Hearing event, is the story of the woman with the issue of blood. That's probably my all time favorite. No, there's maybe a couple more that are right up there, but we're going to give you access to their URL and be able to find all of that.

Randy Frazee:

I want to talk a moment here as we kind of wrap things up, but just want to dive in a little bit more about this thing called One and chat about that for just a little bit. Tell us a little bit about the vision of that, because this is where I came into interacting with you guys and we're actually in a little over halfway through this experience for Lent 2022 right now. So tell us a little bit about One and its origin.

Morgan Jackson:

Well, One comes from the call of God for the whole city or nation to listen. And from the story of 2 Kings 22 and 23 of Josiah, which is the greatest revival in Jewish history when he gathered the whole city to come together to hear the five books of the law. And then the same thing in Nehemiah when Ezra came out and read the book of the law in Ezra 8 and 9. So we said, how can we get a city to come together? We first did it in Houston and had 600 about churches involved including the Catholic church. It was a tremendous thing. Well, I went to Hong Kong. The church in Hong Kong wanted to do it, but it was just the English-speaking church 10 years ago.

Morgan Jackson:

So about four years ago, we were meeting again, and they said, "What could we do for the whole city?" Well now we have digital. And so the Bible.Is app allowed us to have all the languages of the city of Hong Kong, Cantonese, Mandarin, English, Glagolitic. And so they wanted to do it as a whole city and they named it One, One city, One Lord, One word, and One person. They wanted to invite every person to invite One. And so when they went to launch that campaign, that's when you and I had met and they just were so attracted to you and your gentle nature and how you speak that they invited you to come and launch that.

Morgan Jackson:

So you went to Hong Kong to launch it, and you were so impacted by the unity of the church in Hong Kong. I think we have 500 churches in Hong Kong doing it this year that you came back and said, "Hey, let's do this in Kansas City." Now we hit it right at, of course the wrong... Maybe it's God's timing. He's always sovereign, but Covid had hit so the churches weren't able to meet.

Morgan Jackson:

And so you've been leading that charge in the United States. It's now become an international movement. You've helped get on the phone with me, Zooms with Ghana, with Malaysia, with Singapore, and now with India. And so it's expanding as a worldwide movement of One church, One Lord, One word, and every person, one person reaching one person. And so you've been leading not only in Kansas City, but you've spoke into them, sharing with them the things you've known, which is the pastor has to be involved. You need to have a video component, which is where the gospel films, the Lumo films have come in and forming the weekly gathering on Zoom or in presence, and you're bringing those key elements has made the One campaign much more successful. So thank you.

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, I think for everyone listening, I was meeting with the pastor who was visiting from Chicago and I just explained this to him just for a little bit. He goes, "I'm on board with that." I go, "That's the best." So it's essentially a plan for Lent. Really, it's seven, eight weeks leading up to Lent. And initially it started off in Hong Kong as a listening program through the Bible.Is app. And we'll link all that into the show notes, so you can check it out. It's a free app with all of these languages in it, which is so fun and so exciting. And essentially if you listen to 10 minutes a day for 40 days leading up to Resurrection Sunday that you can get through all four gospels or you can do a number of other different programs. But that's what we do. And so that's the base of the program.

Randy Frazee:

And we thought we could really up the engagement if the pastor would speak on the topic. So last year we did the Gospel of Mark and we provided eight sermons, an introductory sermon and then seven more sermons on the gospel of Mark. And this year we're doing John and the seven I Am statements. And then we're encouraging a small group experience through these episodes, if you will, on the life of Jesus that's been produced called the Gospel Project or Gospel Films and Lumo, Is that right? I did that right. And it's a really wonderful opportunity for your small groups or you can start one in a high school, in a business. People are starting them all over the place. It's like 15, 20 minutes of word-for-word laid over in multiple languages as beautiful cinematography of the life of Jesus. And then just some discussion questions come up.

Randy Frazee:

So it's super easy. And then we continue to leave the listening component in it as well. And then are continuing to encourage people to invite one other person. This is the beauty of gospel saturation. And then also be mindful of looking at how you can move us to the 2033 vision maybe by sponsoring a language. And it's just really been quite amazing to see how God's word is going out in this organized way. 32 international cities last year, I think 25 this year. And the word is just going out in a big way and I encourage people to check out Bible.Is.

Randy Frazee:

Let me ask you two more questions and then we can wrap up, Morgan. I just talked to you all day and there's so many things I know you could share that we'll have to leave out of this one. But maybe anticipate another opportunity.

Morgan Jackson:

Love to.

Randy Frazee:

If someone wanted to get involved in Faith Comes by Hearing what's the best way for them to do that and to find you?

Morgan Jackson:

Go to our website, FaithComesbyHearing.com/One, and just go through, look at some of the vision, look at some of the videos and stories, download. You can either download it from there or just the app store Bible.Is so that you have that app. Learn and start using it. So check out one of the plans through the Bible, through the four gospels, maybe the One campaign and learn how to share it. It has 1600 languages. My favorite is to be an Uber. Almost all the drivers are foreign. I find out what country they're from, what their mother tongue is. I find it on Bible.Is, click it, push play, hold it over the back, and they get shocked. And they start like, "What's this guy? Where did he come from?" And they all listen and then they want it and then I share it.

Morgan Jackson:

And so one out of four people in the United States speaks a language other than English at home. So use Bible.Is as your opportunity to share your faith with the person who does your nails, your yard or an Uber driver, somebody. So that would be the easiest way, FaithComesbyHearing.com, Bible.Is.

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, also we'll link all of this in the show notes, but for the One campaign for churches that are interested in it, you can go to One.bible and then if you'll click specifically on OneKC.bible, you'll see the other cities and collections of people doing it. It'll lead you to an understanding of the program and what you could do really anytime you want to do it. I mean, I really encourage people to do it whenever they want do it, but told the guy in Chicago, you should look at doing this with some other churches in your city, which would be really encouraging. And if you go One.bible, OneKC.bible/resources, it'll lead you to all these sermons. And man, it's a really, really exciting thing.

Randy Frazee:

I'm going to ask you one question. I didn't actually prep you for this one, but I like to ask all my guests this. If you could be King Morgan Jackson for a day, people would have to do what you say, okay, what's the one thing that you wish, whether it's pastors or maybe individual Christians, or what's the one thing that you would really want to encourage them to say, "Listen, this is the one thing, I just need you to trust me on this. Do this one thing." What's the one thing that maybe frustrates you that you just wish people would do? And then offer up the thing that you're most encouraged about.

Morgan Jackson:

I think it'd be what we're talking about, is to engage in scripture, is to actually download You Version or Bible.Is app and begin a habit of daily hearing scripture. If you don't have a quiet time, okay, but put it into your routine. So do that, actually begin to listen to scripture.

Morgan Jackson:

I think the thing that's encouraging me the most is just the revival that's sweeping the world and much of it's caused by America and what we've done, our missionaries are giving, but the world, I mean, there was only 5% Christians in Africa a hundred years ago, and now 50% of Africa is Christian. There are only something like 750,000 Christians in China in 1950. Today, they say there's 120 million Christians. India has seen an explosion of the church and church planning. In the global south and Latin America, nominal Catholic, and now almost 35% evangelical. And the Catholic church has come alive.

Morgan Jackson:

And so when I look around the world, I see the spirit of the Lord. And I believe part of it is because as the word of God is being translated in the heart languages and people are hearing God speak their language, that's encouraging me. I see the language of the world, like a ball that got broken at the tower of babble and everybody got a slice. And we're not trying to translate God's word in their language so that God can speak their language. They have a sliver of God's language. God's always spoke that language. All we're doing is putting the word of God in the piece of language that they speak. And when we all gather in Revelation under the throne, every language, tribe, nation and people, I think all the languages will represent the one language of God and it's going to be a beautiful experience. I'm encouraging. I think 2033 can be done.

Randy Frazee:

Yeah, this is so exciting. And I have to tell you, I'm more familiar with this from Mike Sherrow introducing us, and I'm just convinced that a lot of people that are hearing this podcast, we're not aware of this. And I'm going to encourage them to keep digging in. And just a reminder, the whole purpose of this podcast is you get people engaging in God's word and things are going to happen that are all going to be amazingly positive. And in our little corner of the local church that we serve, or wherever we're at, maybe our small group, we see some exciting things happening. But you're giving us a picture of the world and there's some revival-like things that are going on right now. Amidst a lot of things that are super discouraging, God does some of his best work and to just keep pressing in on getting people to engage in scriptures. Amen Morgan?

Morgan Jackson:

Amen. As God plows the nations, let's sow the seed of His word and the soil.

Randy Frazee:

Yeah. Appreciate what you're doing my friend. Thank you so much for joining me today. I'm looking forward to the outcome of this podcast as people hear it.

Morgan Jackson:

Amen. Thank you, Randy. It's been a blessing. Now I'll look forward to a second one.

Randy Frazee:

You betcha. You betcha.

Randy Frazee:

Well, everybody that reps up episode nine of the Bible Roots podcast, I hope you've enjoyed it and if you have enjoyed it, leave us a review. Tell us about what you think about it, check out the show notes and the links, and also make sure you share it with somebody else. Let's get the word about this out, so that 2033, that we're a part of making 2033 happen and we'll see what Jesus does with this. Looking forward to episode 10 coming up. It is going to be the end of this first season. We certainly hope you've enjoyed it. And for now, it's Randy Frazee, the host of the Bible Roots podcast, sponsored by Harper Christian Resources. Have a great day.

Randy Frazee:

Thanks for listening to the Bible Roots podcast. We hope you were encouraged and energized by our discussion today. If you enjoyed this episode, we'd love for you to leave a review. This small gesture will help more church leaders discover our conversations around Bible engagement. And don't forget, like and subscribe to our podcast so you'll never miss a new episode. Now, may your faith be strengthened through God's word today and every day.