



Episode 51: Unreached People Groups – The Facts – Duane Frasier

Duane Frasier works with Joshua Project, highlighting the most gospel-deprived people groups in the world. He attended Bethany College of Missions, followed by an internship in Mexico. Duane and his wife, Erika, live in Colorado Springs with their two sons.

Tell us a little bit about yourself and your work at the Joshua project.

- I attended Bethany College of Mission like you said and then went to Mexico and that's where I caught my mission vision.
- It was there that I learned about this thing called the Joshua Project and I really wanted to get involved, especially once I found out that it was only run by 3 people! Today we're four people. That's surprising to people!
- Because we're a small organization we all wear many hats. I answer all the emails that are sent to Joshua Project (info@joshuaproject.net). I also handle the photos, the maps, and the descriptive text about unreached people groups.
- My wife and I have done a lot with the Spanish translation of the site.
- I also handle the volunteers – we have a lot of wonderful volunteers that help make things happen.

We know you from a web presence and it certainly surprises me that there are only four of you. Maybe you could tell us a little bit about your colleagues and the office environment, if you have an office?

- We all live in Colorado Springs – there are four of us. We're very introverted people and we spend a lot of time in front of our computer screens.
- We have a small office that another organization rents to us at a very gracious price.
- Four of us obviously can't do this by ourselves without standing on the shoulders of other people's research and so we're very beholden to the body of Christ.

Let's unpack some terms. What you do you mean by unfinished task?

- When we talk about the task, we talk about the fulfillment of the Great Commission.
- When Jesus sends us out in the Great Commission, that's a task he's given to the whole church and too long into the future, we're not finished. Some of that may be disobedience. Some of it may be a lack of technology.
- Nevertheless, there's a task before us and it is do-able.



What do we mean by people groups?

- It's not groups of people, but a better word is 'ethnic groups.'
- Peoples are distinct because of the language they speak and the culture they are from. Anytime that the message of the gospel comes up against a barrier – acceptance or understanding – we're talking about people groups.

So, we're not talking about geopolitical countries?

- The Greek word that Jesus uses is "ethne." When you see the word "nations in your bible, it is using this word ethne.
- There are multiple people groups in a country and a people group can span several countries.

What is a reached people group and an unreached people group?

- For Joshua Project, we have numbers that are behind the definition – a people group is unreached if less than 2% of a people group are considered evangelical Christian and less than 5% ascribe to Christianity.
- Some of these groups have a lot of Christian adherents but they aren't Christ followers.

Many of us know the Joshua Project as a website – but it isn't limited to that.

- We have an Unreached People of the Day app for both iOS and Android. Thousands of people are praying daily for one unreached people each day. Today's people group are Moroccan Arabs.
- Search for "Joshua Project" or "Unreached" in the Google Play Store or the Apple Store.

Let's go to the website. If you had someone visiting the website for the very first time, where should they look first? What do you want them to find?

- The whole focus is people groups, so you should be funneled down to stats about unreached people groups and information about them.
- The faces on our website aren't stock photos. All of those represent a distinct people group.
- On the left-hand side of the main page lists how many unreached people groups there are – we update it at least every two weeks.

You mentioned a newer app. Tell us about that.

- We're excited about this new app. Our apps are created by volunteer university students who volunteer their Spring break and come to our office for 'hack-a-thon.'
- It's currently available on Android and will soon be coming out for iOS.
- It's a data gathering app – this is a way for any of you to help us out for the sake of the body of Christ. You can take a photo of a people group and if you have your location enabled, it'll provide is with latitude and longitude. You can fill in information about the church and the people group.



So, let's talk about the data a bit. How many unreached people groups are there?

- For just the unreached, we're talking about 6,700 unreached people groups. And the total people groups is over 16,000.
- Over 40% of the people groups of the world are listed as unreached.
- About 42% of the population of the world lives among unreached people groups.

Geographically, where are these unreached people groups located?

- Probably many of our listeners have heard of the 10/40 window. This is a place in the world between the 10th and 40th parallels – it extends from West Africa to Japan.
- In this strip live the lion share or the vast majority of the unreached – it's also where the most Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus of the world live.
- If you go to the Joshua Project and you look at the maps, you'll see it. You won't need anyone to draw a box around it, but you'll see the 10/40 window.
- The five countries that have the most unreached people groups all share borders.

Why is it so important that we go to these places?

- The simple answer is that the famous last words of Jesus on earth was to send us to these places.
- There's a stat you may have heard before but 81% of Muslims, 81% of Hindus and 81% of Buddhists do not personally know a follower of Christ.
- This is the 'go' of the Great Commission – these people don't live near us.
- You may have heard of visions that Muslims are having – this doesn't let us off the hook, because the vision is usually reminiscent of Paul's vision, where there's someone nearby who is going to tell them more about this man in white.

There are resources available as well on the Joshua Project website that I'd recommend you check out. If someone wants to learn more how can they engage with the Joshua project?

- We'd love to plug people in – we can point you to all kinds of resources, our own and others.
- I would highly recommend the Perspectives course – it strongly focuses on unreached peoples. It will ruin you for God's purposes.
- You can find us on Facebook and Twitter – just search for "Joshua Project." We'd love to have you as a part of our social media community.

Can you share a story of where the Joshua Project has been bearing fruit?

- There's an organization called Advancing Native Missions – they're based in Atlanta but they work in SE Asia. They take our list of unreached people groups in their countries and they send out their workers according to our list.



- They report that back to us and let us know that they've sent people out to these places and they let us know as people come to Christ and the changes they're seeing there.
- We hope that people will use the Joshua Project as a springboard for action and we hope they report back to us so we can give an accurate report of what God is doing around the world.

