

# ***Hey, I'm a Person Too!***

Developing Ministry for People with Special Needs

Presented by Michael Cogley

The CrossRoads

P.O. Box 456

Coshocton, OH 43812

740-622-7525

[mcogley2@comcast.net](mailto:mcogley2@comcast.net)

*"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at his heart."*  
*1 Samuel 16:7b*

## I. Every Person is Important to God!

- a. Each individual has been created by God and is uniquely gifted and of great value.
  
- b. We must look for ways to move people with disabilities from exclusion to inclusion - make them a valuable part of the family.

## II. Facts:

- a. The Disabled community is the fastest growing population group in America.
- b. The Disabled community is the most discriminated against population group in America.
- c. An estimated 54 million Americans have a disability.
- d. One in five people have a disability. What a mission field!

## III. Challenges of the disabled:

- a. Rejection
- b. Low self-esteem
- c. Divorce

- d. Loneliness
- e. Poverty
- f. Pain
- g. Drug and alcohol abuse

#### IV. Three Major Barriers

- a. Inaccessible Facilities
- b. Incorrect media formats

The following website is a valuable resource - [www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov)

#### c. Barriers of Attitude

One of the key challenges for a person with a disability is to be seen as an individual with abilities, and not just seen as a disability!

#### V. Let's talk about ministry:

- a. People with disabilities are not to be viewed as "projects".

IMPORTANT - People with disabilities should be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve!

#### b. Don't:

1. Refer to them as "crippled", "mentally retarded", or "wheel-chair person".
2. Talk down to them
3. Ask "What's wrong with you?"

4. Single them out for prayer
5. Focus on their disability
6. Exclude them

c. Do:

1. Offer the gift of friendship
2. Accept them
3. Include them
4. Be sensitive to their needs
5. Recognize that they have gifts and talents to contribute to the church

VI. Couple of ideas:

- a. Plan special events with special needs in mind - include, don't exclude!
- b. Special Needs Adult Sunday School
- c. Side By Side Buddies
- d. Respite care

***"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Matthew 25:40***

