God's Disability Act

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I. Accessibility is an important issue, particularly if you are part of a group that has been excluded.

   A. There is a tragedy in denied access, "Coloreds Only" sign at the hamburger joint.

   B. In our congregation there are people who are physically disabled because of some tragic circumstance.

   C. Those people are left looking with longing at something that is unavailable!
      1. Civil Rights Act guarantees access to minorities
      2. Disability Act guarantees access to the disabled.
      3. Evidence: Handicapped ramp/ handicapped doors
      4. The feelings of denial can be part of one's experience with God.
      5. I am excluded because of past failures, past mistakes, etc.

II. Over half of the Bible is a history of inaccessibility - There are signs all over the place saying, "Do not enter . . ."

   A. Access limited: Places of darkness and limitation:
      1. Tabernacle with its candlestick, - for the common man label him or her "Disabled, no access!"
      2. Solomon's temple with its small windows - for the common man label him or her "Disabled, no access!"

   B. Man's concept of approaching their deity
      1. Cut themselves in Elijah's day as they sought the benefits of Baal
      2. Made children pass through the fire - god Moloch

III. Having relationship with God was a matter of birth and extremism.

   A. It can even be seen in the N.T.
      1. Syrophonecian woman - label her "Disabled, no access!"
      2. Ethiopian eunuch - label him "Disabled, no access!"

   B. Even the room God made for the excluded was filled up with all kinds of other things - court of the Gentiles. One of the earliest work of Jesus Christ - clean out the temple court

   C. *(John 2:13-16 KJV) And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, {14} And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:*

1. The word translated temple is the word “hieron.” It refers not to the sanctuary, but the outer courts that surrounded the temple, more or less open and available to anybody who wanted to come in. It was commonly called the court of the Gentiles. What did Jesus find in the temple? “Those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting.”

2. For the convenience of worshippers, there were people filling this court - selling acceptable sacrifices and changing Roman money into Jewish shekels.

3. These men were there to make religion easy for the Jewish faithful. There was no need to rear one’s own lamb, or bring one’s own pair of doves. It could all be done for you. Everything was arranged. It was religion made easy.

4. In so doing - making religion easy and convenient they excluded the very people that part of the temple was intended for.

5. Jesus was angered by the idea that the very people that this was for were ignored and their space became a place of easy and comfortable worship.

D. *{15} And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; {16} And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.*

IV. Christ and the birth of the church brings a new message: ACCESS. It is the Lord Jesus Christ’s Disability Act of 32 A.D.

A. Access - three times in N.T. means “the right of approach that a king extends to a subject.”

B. Access means that what sin disables, Christ enables. What sin excludes, Christ includes.

V. Eph. 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles (disabled) in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision (disabled) by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ (disabled), being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel (disabled), and strangers from the covenants of promise (disabled), having no hope (No Messiah - disabled), and without God in the world: (disabled) 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off (disabled) are made

nigh by the blood of Christ. (God's Disability Act - ACCESS) . . . . 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross (God's Disability Act - ACCESS), having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him (God's Disability Act - ACCESS) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, (disabled) but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

VI. What does all this access mean

A. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

B. Hey ye that thirst come and take of the water of life freely.