

## How did Jesus offer welcome?

Watch Video 4 Disabled people and Baptist churches: An interview with Rev Martin Hobgen

[https://youtu.be/3DYntPqE\\_EM](https://youtu.be/3DYntPqE_EM)

**THURSDAY** – Welcoming disabled people in our churches

In Martin's video he talks about the fact that his relationship with God is above all else, that is above relationships with family, work colleagues and others and certainly far above the fact that he is a man in a wheelchair. He longs for a society and a church which sees the woman or man and not their disability or what may even be a unique ability but perceived as a disability.

He reminds us that while churches have often overcome physical barriers for those who are disabled to access their buildings and facilities, there is still some way to go to take down the social and psychological barriers in order to make a genuine welcome in our churches.

### For Reflection

Luke 9:10-11

John 5:1-8

Matthew 11:28

Jesus invites all to enter the Kingdom of God, he does not place any restrictions on anyone and does not judge those who are disabled by the standards of the society in which he lived. In Luke 9 it is said that he healed those that 'needed to be healed', this does not mean all. In John 5 he heals one man of many, but I am sure he equally valued the others he was among at the time. Jesus places equal value on all human life and draws all people to him, those who were traditionally powerful and those who may have been considered weak and insignificant, he raises them up.

### Questions for Discussion

1. In what way might you be challenged by Jesus only healing one man at the Pool of Bethesda?
2. Are there people with certain disabilities whom you find it easier to welcome than others? Why might this be?
3. Does your church have any disabled people in positions of leadership?
4. How can your church extend a greater welcome to people with disability?

### Pray

- If this is relevant for you, seek forgiveness for your attitude to disabled people
- Pray for at least one disabled person you know, this may not be a visible disability, disability comes in many forms.
- Pray for the full diversity of humanity to be embraced in our churches.
- Pray for ordained Baptist ministers, such as Martin Hobgen, to find a welcome as leaders in our churches.