

w/b 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Serve Strong series: **Humble service in the house of the Lord** (Psalm 84) / Geoff Gilbert

### Intro / Icebreaker

Brazil prisons offer their prisoners to reduce their sentence for 4 days (up to 48 days a year) for every book they read and write a report on. What book are you currently reading and why?

### Explore

Read Psalm 84

*<sup>1</sup> How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! <sup>2</sup> My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. <sup>3</sup> Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young - a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.*

*<sup>5</sup> Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. <sup>6</sup> As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.*

*<sup>7</sup> They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.*

*<sup>8</sup> Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob. <sup>9</sup> Look on our shield, O God; look with favour on your anointed one.*

*<sup>10</sup> Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. <sup>11</sup> For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favour and honour; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.*

*<sup>12</sup> Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.*

1. Firstly thank you to everyone who serves in everything you do (there are too many to mention) both at the church and as you reflect the love of God to the people around you - keep pressing on!  
Perhaps look around the room and thank and bless people for the way they serve us.
2. Discuss some of the characteristics of Gods dwelling place (Verses 1-4)
3. What do verses 5-7 teach us about life in general?
4. The door-keeper role was to sit on the threshold of a door, a very low position and one that would require a humble heart. Have you had a similar experience of serving in a difficult situation that required a humble heart? Share your experiences as a group.
5. Read Luke 7:36-48 (Use The Message Translation [paraphrase] if possible)  
How does this passage make you feel? Does it motivate you to serve, and if so how?

### Apply

1. Psalm 84 encourages us to focus on enjoying the presence of God as we serve. What is the Psalm teaching us about developing our relationship with him?
2. As a door keeper there may be an opportunity to catch a glimpse of the King as we serve. What does that mean to you and how do you think you can ensure this happens?
3. At the end of the service Dave highlighted the "Autumn Rain" how do you think you make a difference as we move into this new season by the way you serve? Has God placed anything specific on your heart?
4. Jubilee Goals for 2015 : "The Poor". Jayne Parkin introduced this year's Blythswood Care Shoebox appeal on Sunday which was brilliant. Can you consider ways you can help with this appeal as a cell group? Perhaps a mulled wine and nibbles evening wrapping boxes? Perhaps dedicating part of a cell evening to pray and raise money towards the postage? Try to think outside the (shoe) box!

## **Pray**

Pray for the Holy Spirit to fill every member of your group tonight to refresh knowledge of how God sees you and His amazing love for each person in the room tonight.

There may be people in the room who can identify with verse 3 and simply need to feel the protection of our God. Please pray for those who are finding life difficult, perhaps carrying health problems or other burdens. Encourage each other to draw close to the presence of the King.

Please also pray for Alpha which started on Monday. Pray for the guests and the team of people who are serving.