So, how are your energy levels this morning? Flagging? It’s been a busy week – but it’s so worth it!

We’re going to have a look at a passage of Philippians again this morning. Open your bibles to Philippians chapter 4 and we’re going to start with verse 1: **[Read 4:1]**

Paul has a looping structure to many of his letters, where he makes a point, and the logic flows from there, one point to another, until he comes back to his big point at the end. That’s the case here in Philippians - on Tuesday we read a passage from chapter 1v27 where it says **[Read 1:27]**.

Stand firm! Stand firm in the one Spirit! Stand firm in the Lord! This is what we need to hear, here and now as well! In these final 2 days of the events week, as we are feeling emotionally and physically tired, stand firm in the Lord.

The question is… how? How do I “stand firm in the lord”? Is it just a case of willing ourselves, convincing ourselves of it? Well, no. Listen to chapter 4 verse 1 again **[Read 4:1]**.

“In this way”. In what way? – The way Paul has been explaining throughout his letter to the Philippians! In the flow of Paul’s argument he hasn’t just been drifting off topic before eventually coming back to his main point – no, it’s all part of it.

So let’s have a look at the beginning of chapter 3 – **[Read 3:1]**.

So the first way of standing firm in the Lord? Rejoice in Him! Take time to rejoice in the Lord. The Lord is good, and He has shown his goodness to us. The Lord has turned us from mourning to dancing; he has clothed us with gladness. The Lord has done great things for us; he has restored us to relationship with Him. Take some time, maybe before you go into a lecture or lab, before you have lunch or got to café, to rejoice in the Lord. Fill yourself up, Look at Psalm 30 or Psalm 126, and take the time to contemplate what’s said, and rejoice. Stand firm as you rejoice in the Lord.

This rejoicing in the Lord flows into Paul’s second point – look to the greatness of Christ. Paul had great social standing in His former life – **[Read 3:4-6]** intelligent, well trained, had a good pedigree but **[Read 3:7-8]**. These things which Paul valued, which his society valued, many of which were good and useful in their own right – they become worthless when they start to draw away from Christ. When we look to the greatness of Christ, we see that it surpasses all things, and that anything which distracts from his greatness means that we lose out.

This week don’t put your confidence in events, in the number of people who come to things, in how well a talk is delivered or how many people take a book. When we put our confidence in these things then we cause ourselves and those who we reach out to great harm because we don’t put our confidence in the one on whom we can truly rely! The one whose worth surpasses everything else. Stand firm in this way.

And yet, we aren’t to ignore the situations, people, and places that we find ourselves in. In 3:12 – **[Read 3:12-14]**. Paul found himself in a particular place and time, with a particular set of opportunities afforded him – and that’s the same for us. Paul doesn’t put his confidence in these things – no, but he does see that this is all part of the mission for which Christ called him. This week the Lord has provided us with an amazing opportunity to reach out to people – do be encouraged by the quality of the events, by the buzz around the Christian union as the God in whom we do have confidence is at work. Use the situation which the Lord has set before you to pursue the mission for which he called you.

Stand firm in the Lord today, tomorrow, and beyond. Rejoice in his presence, put your confidence in Him and Him alone, and press on – press on to achieve what he has prepared for you.

Day Ahead:

* Lunchtime: “Suffering: where is God in all our pain?”
  + Café
  + Follow up group
* Evening: “REAL LIFE: a sceptic convinced”
  + Andy Mayo – musician
    - Worth going just for a gig
    - From circumstances in his life
  + Testimony from students?
  + Mike short spoken word

It would be amazing if we could be praying for friends who have come along to things, and for those who have shown an interest during the week, and for those who we can invite today.

* Who has come to things before: write them down
* Who has shown an interest?
* Who can we invite today?
* Tomorrow prayer meeting
* Follow up