

# Stand firm

## Philippians 4:1-9

### Introduction

There are times in life when we must stand firm and not let anything move us. We sometimes need to do it as parents with our children. We sometimes need to do in our workplace or among peers. When have you had to stand firm?

In the letter to the Philippians Paul has been exhorting the believers to stand firm and contend together for the faith of the gospel by living in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Paul is now drawing these exhortations to a close by again reminding them that they needed to stand firm and reminding them of what they needed to be doing. this. Please read verses 1 to 9.

1. What do you think Paul means by standing firm in the Lord?

## Have the same mind

Paul calls upon two women in the congregation to have the same mind. Paul does not usually call people out by name so this would suggest that this was a significant issue for not only them but for the whole of the church. Please read verses 2 to 3 again to understand what was going on.

2. Who were these women and what does Paul plead with them to do and how would this have helped?

3. What do you think would have been involved in helping these two women?

### Think about it

How might have the situation of these two women worked against the church standing firm as one (see Philippians 1:27; 2:2)?

What do you think might have been keeping these women from resolving things (see 2:3,4)?

How is the cause of the gospel hurt by such behaviour?

What responsibility do others have to become involved in disputes like this are going on in the church (see also 1 Cor.6:1-7)?

## Rejoice in the Lord

Despite the suffering and hardship that Paul went through he continued to rejoice, and he also called upon the believers in Philippi to rejoice. In these verses, Paul calls upon the Philippians to rejoice again. He earlier called it a safeguard for them (see 3:1). Here he combines this exhortation to rejoice along with several other brief exhortations that together are the key to facing all sorts of situations in life including the suffering and hardship that comes because of the gospel. Please read verses 4 to 6.

4. What did Paul give as the grounds of the believers rejoicing.

5. Why do you think such rejoicing is a safeguard for believer?

6. What does Paul say was to be evident to all and please explain what this would mean for believers who were facing persecution and hardship?

7. What assurance does Paul give believers who are facing such difficult situations and how does this help (see Psalm 145:14-20 and 2 Tim 4:17)?

8. What were the believers to do instead of being anxious and how would this help?

### Think about it

Paul calls upon believers to always rejoice in the Lord and to always present their prayers and requests to him. This is part of the way that believers stand firm in the Lord.

How has Paul shown himself to be an example of such rejoicing (see Phil 1:18; 2:17-18; 4:10)?

How is it possible to rejoice like this in all the situations that we will face in life?

## The mindset

Paul concludes with the mindset that the believer who stands firm is to have in verses 8 to 9. Please read these verses to discover the things that believers are to carefully reflect on so that they might be shaped by them and do them.

9. Paul lists six qualities and then sums them up in the expression “if anything is excellent or praiseworthy”. These are the things that we are to let our minds dwell on. Please try to describe what these excellent or praiseworthy things are like.

10. Paul’s own teaching and example presented things that were excellent and praiseworthy. What were the Philippians to do with these things?

## Think about it

Thinking back over the letter what were some of these things that the Philippians had heard and seen the apostle do that they were to be reflecting on and thinking about putting into practice (1:9-11; 1:18-26; 2:1-11; 2:17-18; 2:19-24; 3:10-11, 3:14-21)?

How much time do spend thinking and dwelling on those things that are excellent and praiseworthy? How might you do more of this than you currently do now?

What gets in the way of you dwelling on these things that are excellent and praiseworthy?

What is one excellent or praiseworthy thing that has come from reading this letter that you would like to think about more and do more?