

# WHITE HOT

*LIFEgroups*

February 12, 2012

Stabilizer

Philippians 4:1-9

## Context

Joy is an unmistakable theme throughout Paul's letter to the Philippians. This is remarkable because it's written by a man in a prison waiting to find out if he'd live or die. Each sermon in this series unpacks how it's possible for joy to be so evident in Paul's life.

In these first nine verses of chapter four, Paul shows the Philippians how to stand strong in the midst of a life's greatest challenges. You'll find it helpful in this study to read the first three chapters of Philippians before digging into these verses in the ninth chapter.

## Questions for Study

1. What are some current events and changes in our world that point to its instability and is creating a great deal of uncertainty and stress in the lives of many people?
2. There are times in every person's life when we're faced with challenges and difficulties that have the potential of overwhelming us. Turbulent is one way to describe these times. It may be that you're in the midst of one of those times now. Take a few minutes to write down what you're experiencing.
3. What the Apostle Paul wrote in these first nine verses of chapter four, he wrote from personal experience. He knew what it was like to live with a great deal of turbulence. Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 and write down what Paul's experienced that shows he had about as intense and challenging a life as anyone could have. Also, where is Paul as he writes this letter to the Philippians?
4. Ships and airplanes have at least one thing in common. They have stabilizers. Where they on a ship and where are they on an airplane? And what do they do?
5. In verse one Paul points to a principle for standing firm in the most difficult of circumstances. (In Sunday's sermon Steve calls it Paul's stabilizer.) What is this stabilizer?  
  
Three clues to help you answer this question: 1. He doesn't give the principle in verse one. He points to it. 2. The word "therefore." 3. The word "that."
6. Paul moves immediately from pointing to this principle to dealing with a specific problem in the church in Philippi. What was the problem? How could the principle Paul points to in verse one help the people creating the problem in this church, do what's needed to resolve it?
7. Spiritual disciplines are very valuable in our lives for many reasons. One reason is the strength they give us to stand firm in hard times. Paul gives three disciplines in verses four through nine. What would you say they are, and how does each one help us stand firm?