

THINK ABOUT IT

Participant Version



You know it's coming. You've been far from home, away from family and friends. You've been in a different city—maybe a different part of the country—for almost a week. They know you've been doing some cool stuff, and they're anxious to hear about it. You better be ready. After the hello's and the welcome back's and the hugs from your mom, you're going to get a very predictable question. "Well," they'll say, "how was it?"

How are you going to respond?

You could simply say, “awesome.” Or “hot.” Or “loud.” Or “hot.” Or “inspiring.” Or, “hot.” But they want to hear more. They need to hear more. So let’s think about what you’re going to tell them.

Throughout the Gathering we’ve been hearing from God through the writings of the Apostle Paul. In the last chapter of his letter to the Philippians he gives us specific direction for our thinking. As you prepare to answer that question, listen to what Paul tells us about our thinking.

Read Philippians 4:8-9.

- What does Paul tell us to think about in these verses?
- Did you experience anything this week that fits this description? Share some examples.
- Paul didn’t have the LCMS Youth Gathering specifically in mind when he wrote these verses. What do you think he did have in mind?
- If you had to narrow it down to one thing, what did Paul want the people of Philippi to think about above all else?

Like the other prophets and apostles who wrote books of the Bible, Paul focused his teaching and preaching and writing on one thing—Jesus Christ, crucified and risen for us. Again and again he emphasizes that Christ alone is our salvation, Christ alone is our hope, Christ alone is our guide. You know this means, right? IN CHRIST ALONE is not just the theme of this Gathering. It is the summary of our lives as Christians!

So let's try this: Read Philippians 4:8 again and every time you see the word "whatever" replace it with the name of Jesus.

To think about and live IN CHRIST ALONE is to live a life shaped by our baptism. It's a life of forgiveness. It's a life of hope. It's a life of service. And it's a life of community.

So, you know they're going to ask...How was it?

How are you going to respond?

Paul loved the Philippians, which is why he wrote this letter to them. He wanted them—and he wants us—to live a full and joyful life IN CHRIST ALONE. Listen to his parting words in Philippians 4:1, "Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved."

That's God's Word to the Philippians. That's God's Word to all Christians. That's God's Word to you. As you stand in the community of believers in your congregation, as you recall the community of believers who just gathered together in New Orleans, and as you look forward to the eternal gathering of all the forgiven saints on that last and great day, hear this Word from God to all us: Stand together, and stand firm IN CHRIST ALONE!

Closing Prayer