



CHRONIC JOY® DEVOTIONAL

God's Got It - No Worry Needed

By Erin Burkhardt

WE DON'T "HAVE IT" BECAUSE GOD'S GOT IT

Life with chronic illness is hard. Perhaps you are frustrated that you can't do things your friends can. Maybe you feel overwhelmed because you have so much to worry about — or you have days when it all just feels like too much.

Every day our culture bombards us with messages of self-empowerment. We are told to take charge of our life, push ourselves to the max, and have a "can do" attitude. With chronic illness, this pressure can leave us feeling overwhelmed and insufficient because, despite our best efforts, we continue to suffer.

When you're feeling low, someone might say to you, "You've got this!" Has anyone ever told you that? How did it make you feel?

Maybe it boosted your confidence, but when the next wave of pain hit, that confidence seemed to vanish. Encouragement from our loved ones to help us in our fight with chronic illness is so needed. However, not all words of encouragement can help us if they are not rooted in God's truth. While it might be nice to hear that we "have this," it also puts a giant weight on our shoulders, one we aren't meant to carry.

GOD'S GOT IT

In the Bible, there's a story of a very strong man. His name was Samson, and his motto should have been "I've got this!" Physically, no one could compete with him, not even lions! God had given him super-human strength to set him apart as an example, but Samson was proud and foolish, causing him to lose his strength and landing him in prison. Right before his death, he humbled himself and asked God for the strength to destroy his enemies and honor God.

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God granted this request and gave Samson strength one last time. It took Samson his whole life to realize that his abilities were not something to boast about or take for granted. In the end, he realized that it was God who "had it" and it was God who "had it" all along.

The Bible tells us "we can do all things through Him who gives us strength." We have to remind ourselves that despite what the world says, it is God who gives us our strength. Every day your illness may bring many challenges, but when those hurts are too much, you can rest in God's loving arms, reminding yourself, "He's got this!"

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- Can you think of a time when you felt super-strong like Samson? How did it make you feel?
- How did it feel when that strength disappeared? Were you angry, frustrated, or sad?
- How can you remind yourself of Philippians 4:13? Do you journal or paint? Perhaps you like crafts or knitting, sports, and the outdoors. While you go about your favorite activity, reflect on how God gave you the ability to do that specific task.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for being our strength on the good days and the bad days. You give us the courage to face our illness and remain hopeful. Thank you for reminding us that we don't have to hold everything together because you "have it" for us. Help us to remember that we were never meant to carry our burdens alone. Thank you for your never-ending love. In Jesus' name Amen.

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