

# The Source

I can do [everything] through him who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)

Catalogs surrounded me as I sat on the floor of our family room. ABeka, Sonlight, Five in a Row. Which curriculum should I buy? Though I had taught graduate and undergraduate journalism courses, being responsible for my daughter Lisa's education overwhelmed me. What did I know about teaching a five-year-old?

Yet my husband, Jim, and I had prayed, explored schools, and weighed the pros and cons of homeschooling an only child. It took more than a year before we were certain of God's leading to homeschool.

The more I thought about homeschooling, the more I lay awake at night. What if I messed up her foundational years?

"Lord, I have no idea how to homeschool. Please help me," became my daily prayer.

Weeks later at church a sentence grasped my heart: "God *always* empowers you for the task he gives you." It reminded me of Philippians 4:13.

On our first day of school, Lisa slid her tiny hand into mine as we bowed in prayer. I knew then that Jesus would walk with us on this journey.

On our last day of school that year, as Lisa read aloud from her little Bible, I blinked back tears. Successfully homeschooling her hadn't rested on my academic qualifications and abilities, but on Jesus, my source.

That evening Lisa gasped when Jim handed her a certificate for completing kindergarten. Eyes sparkling, she refused to let it go until we promised to frame it. That certificate still has a place of pride in our home.

Every year since then, we've made our last school day special. It's a celebration of the end of a school year. And it's a celebration of God manifesting his strength through my weakness.

**Digging deeper:** What reassurance does Philippians 4:13 offer you?

# He'll Catch You

"I will trust and not be afraid." (Isaiah 12:2)

"How do I know you'll catch me?" Seven-year-old Caleb peered down from a tiny ledge five feet off the ground, a deep gorge behind him.

"Look at us," yelled a homeschool co-op buddy. A dozen kids and adults faced each other as their intertwined arms formed a safety net.

Caleb had been the first in line for Trust Fall, a team-building exercise for our co-op kids at camp. Now he took a half step backward, bringing his back up against the solid tree trunk.

"Well, I trust you with my secrets," his voice faltered. "But not to catch me."

"But we're your friends," a chorus of voices replied.

"You can do it, Caleb," the adults encouraged.

He sighed and turned around to face the tree. He closed his eyes, leaned backward, and with clenched fists, dropped off the ledge to our cheers.

Seconds later, a redhead popped up from the carpet of intertwined arms.

"That wasn't too bad." A huge grin spread across his face as he jumped down.

*I'm so much like that,* I thought, as we walked away. I trust God with my deepest longings and struggles. Yet when he leads me to step out, I pull back.

Isaiah 12:2 is a simple but profound reminder that God is trustworthy. The word *trust* implies a place of security. The remainder of the verse gives the reason not to fear: "The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation." Trusting is a choice to find strength in the Lord. It's faith in action. When God calls, I can leap knowing that "underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

**Digging deeper:** Can you leap with abandon into God's arms? Reflect on Psalm 91.