



## ***In Christ I am . . . Confident!***

### **Main Truth**

God wields great power for those who choose to believe—more than enough to break the yoke of ANY bondage. Abba applies the same power to our need that He exerted when He raised Christ from the dead.

### **Introduction**

When I was pregnant with my fourth son, Max, I went in for a routine blood test at 16 weeks. A few days later I received a phone call from my doctor requesting that I come in for an ultrasound. The blood test had come back and there were some indications that the baby might have Down Syndrome. Fear gripped me to the very core. This was something completely out of my control, something I couldn't fix. After the ultrasound was done, I went to the restroom. On the back of the stall door there was a sticker. As I read the words, I tangibly felt the power of the Holy Spirit come over me and even though my eyes saw the words, I heard them ringing in my ears: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I walked out of that bathroom a different person. Why? The circumstances hadn't changed in that few minutes—there was still a possibility that my son would have Down Syndrome. What had changed was that "the eyes of my heart" had been enlightened to the promise that was on that sticker. At that moment, those words became power, dominion, might and strength. I went from believing in Him to believing Him. A seismic shift had taken place in my soul in the matter of just a few minutes. What I had experienced was His resurrection power, vibrant and alive, in a bathroom stall!  
—Paula Valenta (FCC member)

## Passage to Study

### Ephesians 1:15–23 (New Living Translation)

*“Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for Christians everywhere, I have never stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the wonderful future he has promised to those he called. I want you to realize what a rich and glorious inheritance he has given his people. I pray that you will begin to understand the incredible greatness of his power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms. Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else in this world or in the world to come. And God put all things under the authority of Christ, and he gave him this authority for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is filled by Christ, who fills everything everywhere with his presence.”*

## Discussion Questions

1. Read Ephesians 1:18–20. How does Paul describe the “power for us who believe”? Think of any stronghold you face. Does your stronghold require more power than it takes to raise the dead? Does the fact that we are “sealed” in Christ help you see things differently?
2. Read Ephesians 1:17. What is it that Paul prays for on behalf of the Ephesians? Our Christian life must be centered around this purpose: to know God as He is in truth, as revealed by His word and to correct our false, idolatrous conceptions of who God is. Take a moment to pray and ask the Spirit to reveal what, if any, false conceptions of God you have.
3. Read Ephesians 1:18, focusing on the aspect of inheritance. When people die, they usually leave their loved ones material goods as an inheritance. Now read Ephesians 1:11. How does it make you feel to know that YOU were chosen by Him because YOU are so precious to Him and that He considers YOU His inheritance? (See also Deuteronomy 32:8–9.)
4. Read Ephesians 1:19–21. The power that works in us is the mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead. There never needs to be a “power shortage” in the Christian life. It is also the mighty power that raised Jesus to heaven after His resurrection, raising Him above all demonic foes and every potential enemy of all time and this same power is at work in Christians. Have you been living your life out of this power or out of the power of your own strength, understanding, and wisdom? What difference does it make to live out of His power? What is the fruit of that?

## Application

1. Read Isaiah 43:10. It says God has chosen His people for two reasons—to **know** and **believe** Him. To *know* is the word *yada*. It basically means “to ascertain by seeing.” The ancient term included a very personal level of familiarity and was often used to depict the close relationship between husband and wife. The term points to the fact that God wants us to know Him intimately through personal experience. He does not want us to settle for second-hand faith. The word believe is *aman*, meaning “to believe, trust, have confidence.” The words *yada* and *aman* fit together to say God wants us to trust Him because we know Him intimately. He wants us to have confidence in Him because we have seen Him. In what sense do you think we can “see” God? How did Paula “see” God in the story above?
2. Read 1 Samuel 17. List the observations that David made about Goliath. Now underline his references to the Lord. God—thoughts outnumber Goliath thoughts nine to two. How does this ratio compare to yours? How could living out of the “power for us who believe” change this ratio?
3. Read 2 Samuel 5:6–9. Notice the word “nevertheless.” Wouldn’t you love God to write a *nevertheless* in your biography? Born to alcoholics, *nevertheless* she led a sober life. Dropped out of college, *nevertheless* he mastered a trade. Made many mistakes, was sometimes mired in sin, *nevertheless* He called them His beloved. What *nevertheless* would you love for God to write into your biography? What *nevertheless* has God already written into your biography?

## Digging Deeper (to be done outside the group)

As you enter into His “sanctuary” right now, note how you are feeling, what you are concerned with, what has been weighing heavily upon you. Write those things down. Read the following promises out loud and notice what ministers to you in each one:

Psalm 27:1

Psalm 121:8

John 16:33 (Many of the greatest athletes say that their real contest is a mental, not physical, one. It’s the same way in our spiritual lives. Our confidence comes not from looking around at our physical circumstances, but from looking to God.)

Proverbs 3:5–6

Romans 8:38–39

Philippians 4:11–13

1 Peter 1:3–6

Hebrews 10:23

John 14:1

Psalm 94:19

Romans 5:1-5

Ephesians 3:20

Now close your eyes and breathe in His presence. What do you notice about how you are feeling? Do you feel stronger on the inside, even though the circumstances haven't changed?