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There is a story of a man who was driving through the countryside when he saw a farmer sitting on his porch with a dog. The driver stopped and said, “Hey, does your dog bite?” The farmer replied, “Nope, my dog doesn’t bite.” So, the man got out of his car and reached down to pet the dog. The dog jumped up and bit him on the arm! The man yelled, “I thought you said your dog doesn’t bite!” The farmer calmly replied, “That’s not my dog.”

We laugh because it’s a reminder that faith requires clarity and understanding — knowing whom we’re trusting in. Sometimes we claim to have faith, but we place it in the wrong things: our health, our wealth, our position, or our own strength. But the centurion in today’s Gospel — a Roman soldier, not even part of Israel — teaches us what true faith looks like: faith that amazes even Jesus Himself.

The Gospel we heard today is one of the most compact yet powerful stories of faith in all of Scripture. In just a few verses, we witness a portrait of need, an expression of deep humility, and a demonstration of power that transcends every human boundary.

Our first key point is “The Unlikely Petitioner.” A centurion — a Roman officer commanding about a hundred soldiers — approaches Jesus. This man is not a son of Abraham. He is a Gentile, a representative of the occupying Roman power. To the Jewish people, he would have been seen as unclean, an outsider, even an enemy. He had every reason to be proud and self-reliant.

And yet, the centurion comes humbly. He doesn’t send soldiers or servants; he comes himself. He doesn’t command; he pleads. His posture of humility contrasts sharply with his position of authority. That’s the

beginning of faith — when pride gives way to need, and authority bows before mercy.

Then we see “The Unconventional Faith.” Jesus, moved by compassion, immediately responds: “Shall I come and heal him?” That question in itself is radical. For a Jewish rabbi to enter a Gentile’s home would risk ritual defilement — yet Jesus doesn’t hesitate. His willingness already points to the universal reach of His mercy.

But then, something even more astonishing happens. The centurion stops Him and says, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof.” Imagine that — a Roman officer calling a poor Jewish rabbi Lord and confessing his unworthiness!

He recognizes in Jesus an authority greater than his own. And then he utters one of the most profound statements of faith ever recorded: “But only say the word, and my servant will be healed.” This is the heart of faith. The centurion’s trust does not depend on Jesus’ physical presence, a touch, or a ritual act. It rests entirely on the power and authority of Jesus’ word.

He understands authority because he lives by it: “I too am a man under authority,” he says. “I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes.” He knows that when Jesus speaks, reality obeys. No wonder Jesus marvels! He turns to the crowd and says, “Truly, I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.” Those who had the Scriptures and the promises often demanded signs; this outsider believed simply in the spoken word. Faith that amazes Jesus is faith that trusts His word without needing proof.

We live in a world that craves the tangible — we want to see God’s presence, feel His touch, witness His miracles. There’s nothing wrong with longing for such experiences. But the centurion’s faith challenges

us to go deeper — to a mature faith that believes even when it doesn't see.

It's the kind of faith that prays, "Lord, even if I don't see Your hand, I will trust Your heart." It's a faith that rests not on the visible, but on the invisible power of God's word.

Finally, we witness the power of God's word in action. Jesus doesn't go to the house; He simply speaks: "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant is healed at that very hour.

There's no touch, no spectacle, no ceremony — just the spoken word of Christ. The same word that created the universe, calmed the storm, forgave sins, and raised the dead.

That same word is still active today. The Word of God is not a memory — it's a living reality. It speaks in Scripture, it heals in the sacraments, it nourishes us in the Eucharist. Jesus, the living Word, is still speaking into our lives. The question is: do we believe His word is enough?

So, what does this mean for us today? It means that the same Word that healed the centurion's servant is available to us — in our sickness, our fears, our broken relationships, and our doubts. Jesus is still looking for faith that amazes Him — not grand gestures, but quiet trust. Faith that says, "Lord, I am not worthy," and yet still believes, "But only say the word."

When you pray for healing and don't see results, keep believing. When you face uncertainty and don't feel God's presence, trust in His word. When you bring your children, your worries, your sins, your hopes to Him, believe that His word has the final authority. The authority of His promise is greater than the authority of your problem. For the Word of the Lord is powerful. It can calm the storm, raise the dead, and with a

single word, it can reach the deepest wound in your heart — bringing healing, hope, and salvation.