

Children's Message
1.28.07
4th Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture ref: 1 Corinthians 13

Good morning.

I have a story for you. It's a sweet story about an old dog and a little kitten.

Once upon a time there was an old dog named Rex who really knew what it was to love. Rex was patient and kind and very happy when something good happened to someone else, even if it didn't happen to him. Rex was never rude- he wouldn't consider jumping up on someone! And he didn't brag when he had done something good- like bringing in the newspaper. Rex was a very loving dog.

One day, a kitten wandered into the life of this dog, Rex. Rex found her cowering in the corner of the garage behind a garbage can. She was all dirty and half-starved. The kitten, though she needed help, was frightened of Rex. And she hissed and spat when Rex came near her. But remember, Rex was very patient and even though the kitten scratched Rex's nose and bit his ears, eventually Rex was able to gently carry the kitten over to his own bowl of food and let her eat every last crumb. The kitten had a full tummy now and was stronger; and when Rex tried to wash its matted fur by licking the kitten, the kitten snapped at Rex and scratched him even harder. But ol' Rex's love did not insist on its own way- so the old dog kept caring for the little kitten.

Other neighborhood dogs came by and looked at the raggedy kitten scratching the old dog every time he tried to help and they told him, "Why do you bother with that dirty little kitten? Look at all the scratches it has given you! You should give up on it." But Rex's love never gave up, never lost faith, and it lasted through every difficulty. So that ol' dog kept caring for the kitten.

Before long, Rex had a very sore nose and chewed up ears, but the kitten looked much better. Its fur was cleaned and groomed and soft. Its little belly was plump. Its whiskers were straight, and its eyes were bright.

Well, the next time the other dogs came around, there sat loving Rex; his scratches healed and he was happily curled around a little purring ball of a kitten. Ol' Rex had not only saved the kitten's life, he had also taught it how to love.

This week, I want you to take time to think about 2 things:

- How you love other people and how they love you. Are you like ol' Rex and keep loving no matter what? Or could you be like the poor kitten who is loved no matter what?
- Secondly- think about how you love God and how God loves you. Do you love God no matter what- because one thing we know for sure is that God loves us- no matter what!

Reverend Wiley, will you please lead us in a prayer?