

## Sunday Message for April 18

“Beloved, we are God’s children now...” the writer of I John declares in this week’s Epistle reading. When I am asked about my journey of faith, I respond that there has never been a time in my life when I was not aware that I am a child of God. I am filled with memories of family and a congregation in which I saw faith at work. John’s words affirm that God’s love for me has existed even before I was aware of it and has been with me when I wasn’t as sure of its presence.

One of the most powerful confessional statements of the Presbyterian Church is this: “In life and in death we belong to God” found in the Brief Statement of Faith. God’s love for us is not conditioned upon action on our part. God’s love is not quid pro quo. God’s love is eternal and surrounds us even when we cannot or choose not to acknowledge it.

I John affirms that we are God’s children now. It also points out that we are not what we will be. This doesn’t give us a pass on living as children who know they are loved. It doesn’t give us an excuse to behave badly toward one another. The affirmation that we belong to God – that we are God’s children – reveals that like children we have some growing up to do. We will reach our maturity when Christ is fully revealed.

Since we are God’s children NOW, we are to live and work and play together with energy. Like children on the playground we practice our faith as we negotiate, speak out, tug at one another, create teams and compete. We are to share our lunches, games, and stories as we learn to live in relationships with one another.

Blessings  
Edward