

REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 5/21/18

"You have turned for me my mourning into dancing."- Ps. 30:11



While photographing in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, I came across a mother black bear and her two young cubs. The mother watched while the cubs danced. Actually they weren't dancing, but just playing and wrestling, but it looked like dancing to me. Whatever you wish to call it, they looked like they were having a ball. Standing on their hind legs with their paws on each other for support, they exemplified the unbridled and uninhibited joy of youth. Without a care in the world and protected by the watchful eye of their mother, what could be better? Such exuberant spontaneous enthusiasm seems to dissipate with age. I wonder why. I think the reality of living in a sinful fallen world has something to do with it. But even as an adult, don't you just want to dance sometimes? Even if others might scoff or berate, aren't there times when you just don't care what others think? Occasionally, the joy that builds up inside has to be expressed in dance, in song, in unashamed worship. And such worship cannot be contrived or artificially manufactured. True worship comes from within, not without. We don't worship because others tell us we should worship. We worship because we can't help but worship. We worship because we know who we are and who He is. We worship because we have been freed, redeemed, and justified. Of course what might appear to be worship can be faked, or even manipulated. But God knows the difference. These cubs danced and played because God made them to dance and play. Whenever the joy of the Lord wells up within you, go ahead and dance. God delights in turning mourning into dancing. No matter what others may think, I believe God likes it. - John