



*God's wrath is short;
God's favor lasts a lifetime.
Weeping spends the night,
But joy comes in the morning.
(Psalm 30: 5)*

*Yonder is the sea, great and wide, ...
There go the ships to and fro,
And Leviathan,
Which you made for the sport of it.
(Psalm 104: 25,26)*

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These passages are from two Psalms from recent Sunday readings that sparked a sense of joy, almost an audible chuckle, in me when I heard them sung. Both Psalms describe the greatness and fearsome power of God. I was in the midst of seriously reflecting on my acts of the past week, acknowledging my missteps and omissions, gratefully accepting forgiveness for failing once again and then, suddenly, I sensed that God winked or raised an arch eyebrow at me. Psalm 30 recounts the ups and downs of falling in and out of favor with God, and near the end of the Psalm there is a second reference to the joy that comes from God:

*You have turned my wailing
into dancing;
you have put off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy.
(Psalm 30:11)*

Psalm 104 is a glorious account of God's greatness as exhibited in mountains, winds, lions' roars and terrifying power of life or death. But in the middle of the list of God's greatness comes a reference to the creation of the Leviathan simply for the sport of it. How I love a joker. How I love to be played with. How grateful I felt for the zest those particular scriptures added to my life.

What pleasure and sense of power come from being connected to a Creator with a sense of sport. What an example for His creatures. Animals that play together as cubs, stay together as packs. The freewheelingness, the experimentation with the unpredictable, the exuberance of play, all lead to stronger social connections.

I am grateful for God's love in all its facets: constant, demanding, forgiving, exuberant, infectious.

*Dear God,
Play with me more. Upset my expectations so
that I will be incapable of indifference. Amen*