

## **Monday, March 31: New Year's Day**

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<https://open.spotify.com/track/7F5oktn5YO5R9eR5YsFtqb>

On tough days, my family and I have Taylor Swift dance parties. We turn up the volume on a track like “Paper Rings” or “Look What You Made Me Do” and let loose with the sort of wild, flailing dance moves that you’d never throw on the floor of a club, but which somehow fit perfectly in your living room. After a couple of songs, we’ve usually released enough stress that we’re ready to move on to the rest of the evening routine of teeth-brushing, bedtime stories, and evening chores.

One night after our dance party, I moved on to the dishes without stopping the music—which is how I discovered the final track on Swift’s *Reputation*, “New Year’s Day.” The shift from the driving beat of the rest of the album to a simple piano track caught my attention, but it was the words that drew me in.

*“Don’t read the last page,  
But I stay when you’re lost, and I’m scared, and you’re turning away.  
I want your midnights  
But I’ll be cleaning up bottles with you on New Year’s Day.”*

I was struck by the faithfulness and the steadfast love expressed in these lyrics. Usually love songs are either about the highs of love—the sparkling, passionate, life-changing moments of affection—or the lows of love—fights, break-ups, and losses. But this song captures something in the middle: The beauty of love that shows up and stays in the ordinary messiness of life. The song is powerful because it reminds us of what we overlook both in our human relationships, and in our relationship with the Almighty.

Often when we praise God, we talk about God’s power in the highest highs and the lowest lows. We sing about God creating the universe and giving life. We celebrate God liberating the Israelites and speaking comfort to those in exile. We proclaim God’s triumphant power in miracles and moments of victory. Or we talk about God’s power made known in weakness, in times of desperation and deep grief. But what about the in-between?

In Swift’s lyrics I heard an echo of Jesus’ promise from Matthew 28:20, his last words before ascending to heaven: “Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” The phrase we typically translate as “Always” actually appears in the Greek as “all the days.” It’s not just a blanket promise of forever, it is the assurance of divine presence with us each and every day. Jesus promises his disciples to be with them going forward as he has been throughout his earthly ministry; he will be with them, with us, in the ordinary activity of our lives. Jesus promises to be with us on all the days. The good days. The bad days. The days of celebrating. The days of mourning. And the in-between days of cleaning up bottles and doing the dishes.

Those in-between days are where we spend most of our time as humans. We have big celebrations and we have seasons of deep struggle, but the majority of our days are ordinary. We spend more time doing laundry and dishes and errands than we do having parties or crying at loved ones' bedsides. What's sort of miraculous is that Almighty God, the Creator of the Universe, loves us enough to show up on ordinary days, too. God is with us as much on a regular Tuesday afternoon as the most joyous Sunday morning or hardest Thursday night. God loves us as deeply, and cares as much for our well-being when we're cleaning up the morning after as when we're celebrating the night before.

This is what God's faithfulness looks like. It is the Spirit of God with us on all the days. It is the comfort and guidance of God not just in our highest high and lowest lows, but in the midst of in-between times. It is the love of the God who is invested in our every day, as well as our eternity.