

A Prayer for the Beginning of a Year

by Wayne Garvey

O God of Hope and Promise,
Though the turning of the year is simply a human act of marking time,
this ritual affects us at the core.
We are stirred with a longing for freshness and change.
“New Year’s resolutions” churn through our minds, and all our intentions swell with hope.
We surrender this desire for growth and change to you.
Only you can direct this energy into that which glorifies you.
Only you can keep us in focus, can keep us energized,
when the enthusiasm of the new year begins to wane.

On this fresh first day, we are hopeful, but realize that
we cannot fill this year with meaning and purpose on our own.

We must have you.
For we know that life is about to happen.

The newness will fade and our hours and days will be strewn once again with disappointment,
pain, grief, and tears, even amid moments of blessing and thanksgiving.
Remind us that all our days, the good and the hard, are within your view,
and that your good will and immense love are ever turned toward us.

Lord, keep that in the forefront of all my thinking and planning.
I seek you in this new dawning.
Help me to make Jesus the compass of my hours, to take Him into my plan for each day.
Teach me that, even when I fail spectacularly, you are there to forgive,
and to move me onward to the next step.
Lord, raise me up, not to prominence,
but to that place of utter trust, total dependence, and humble surrender,

knowing that you are Emmanuel still, and that you will not forsake me.
Therefore I go into this year with confidence,
and I will go out in joy, praising you, my Lord and my God.

Amen.

