



Better DAYS

“And you asked me what I want this year
And I try to make this kind and clear
Just a chance that maybe we’ll find better days
’Cause I don’t need boxes wrapped in strings
And designer love and empty things
Just a chance that maybe we’ll find better days”

—Goo Goo Dolls

KNOWN FOR THEIR EMOTIONALLY COMPLEX LYRICS, THE GOO GOO DOLLS’ SONG “BETTER DAYS” IS NO EXCEPTION. The band’s lead singer, John Rzeznik, wrote the song during a difficult season in his life, where he was grieving the loss of his sister and battling addiction. The lyrics became a message to himself and anyone else who needed encouragement during tumultuous times. The song conveys a powerful message of forgiveness, hope, and perseverance, while stressing the importance of human connection when days are darkest and hope seems lost.

As the holiday season approaches, our world is grappling with serious conflicts, suffering, and devastation. I find myself going back to this song again and again. Through the turmoil and the uncertainty, the need for human connection and hope becomes more profound than ever as we long for “better days.”

I do not have the word count in this article to go through all the diverse cultural and religious traditions that focus on light. Hogmanay, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Diwali, Hanukkah, Ramadan, and the Lunar New Year are just a few I can name. Not all the celebrations of light occur at the same time on the calendar; however, at least in America, December marks the peak of our “lit” holiday activities. We light candles, gather around the fireplace, decorate homes, and bedazzle trees with shimmering lights and sparkles.

In the Pratt house, we go all out! We decorate everything outside and inside, top to bottom. I love the joy it brings to my home. Sometimes, even though it has become a verifiable mess of childhood ornaments, I turn off all the lights in my house, save the Christmas tree, just to see it shine. Throughout the month, I am constantly reminded of the truth that light can and does push back darkness.

December is a perfect time to specifically remember to show our light to a world that desperately needs it. Find those people or those causes that need your support and give what you can to help. The true spirit of the holiday season should encourage all of us to make the world a better place. Sometimes it is the littlest things that can have the biggest impact. A small light shines the brightest in the dark.

If you ask me what I want this year, I want brighter, better days for all of us in 2024, and I promise to do my part to make it happen.

LAURA PRATT

2023-2024 President, Texas Young Lawyers Association



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