

Ellie Goetz

*Dawn FM*

The album *Dawn FM* conveys ideas of spirituality and Christianity through mindful questions between songs and deep, introspective lyrics. In January of 2022, the renowned pop artist Abel Makkonen Tesfaye, or “The Weekend,” released a 16-track album relaying a journey through purgatory. The album is structured as a radio station with Canadian actor Jim Carrey providing eerie yet insightful narration during the intros and outros of the songs. Carrey is famously known for his role in the movie *Bruce Almighty*, a story in which his character learns many life lessons about love and disappointment while getting to “play God” for a day. *Dawn FM* possesses many tracks with titles following religious topics ranging from “Sacrifice” to “Every Angel is Terrifying.” Despite heavy themes of heartbreak and discontent, the album is upbeat, and most of the songs are pop and electronic. If someone is unfamiliar with the album, they might mistake the tracks as lighthearted, as opposed to being a piece of work that embodies a much larger message around God and the afterlife.

At the album's start, Jim Carrey can be heard reassuring listeners that he'll “be there to hold your hand and guide you through this painless transition.” The transition being discussed is in reference to purgatory, which can be defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as “purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.” This introduction exhibits the religious undertones at play, inviting listeners to view the album experience as a collective journey or spiritual awakening. Although there are many pieces worth reviewing, the closing track titled “Phantom Regret by Jim” stands out the most. With a futuristic-gospel nuance playing in the background, Jim Carrey concludes the album with a series of questions for the listeners. In this grand finale of a track, Carrey asks about the things you

owned throughout your lifetime and the things that you remember. Listeners may find themselves applying Jim's questions of "how many grudges did you take to your grave? When you weren't liked or followed, how did you behave?" to their own lives. Additionally, he offers advice on self-improvement, proposing that "Heaven is for those who let go of regret/And you have to wait here if you're not all there yet." This encourages the audience to continue to work towards the purification of the soul in hopes that they will be able to transcend into Heaven. This theme is seen commonly throughout the Christian religion as many people attend church, provide acts of service, and participate in confession to own up to sins and exert goodness into the world, with the goal of Heaven as a motivator.

Followers of Catholicism believe in the confession of their sins and the cleansing of the soul before being able to transcend into Heaven. The end of the transition from purgatory to heaven is conveyed throughout the second half of the track as Carrey calmly tells the ones in purgatory to "unwind your minds" and "train your souls to align." These instructions transport listeners, making them feel like they are being spoken to directly. The counsel that Carrey offers emanates a Godly presence through guided meditation. This demonstrates what some people might expect to happen to them after death as their souls find peace, letting their bodies finally rest. The music that plays throughout the song is meditative and harmonious. Towards the end of the track, The Weekend hums echoing scales, giving a gospel-like ending to the album. This ending exemplifies the transcension to heaven and is accompanied by the advice, "You gotta be Heaven to see Heaven. May peace be with you." The conclusion to the album embodies many religious ideas of transcension, confession, acceptance, and Heaven, which are all tremendously important to faith and religious life. That said, *Dawn FM* is a well-orchestrated pop album that conveys many messages of religion and spirituality, using purgatory and purification of the soul

as the main reference point to help navigate listeners through the relatable themes of disappointment and heartbreak.

### Work Cited

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