

From: Devotionals Daily newsletter@e.faithgateway.com
Subject: God turns gloom into good
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God Turns Gloom into Good

Today's inspiration comes from:

[Whatever Happens](#)

by Robert J. Morgan

Last year during a speaking engagement in Tupelo, Mississippi, I checked out of my hotel and started my truck. It roared like a motorcycle with no muffler. During the night somebody had stolen my catalytic converter. I had to leave my truck behind, rent a car, deal with insurance, and send somebody back to fetch my truck. After all that, the vehicle still wasn't working right, so I left it at the dealership while on another trip.

When I returned, I used a ride-sharing app to take me to the dealership for my truck. As I sat in the back seat, I noticed a Bible in the seat pocket. I asked the young driver about it. He said it had belonged to his dear, departed aunt, and he liked to keep it close to remind him of her. I told him he should read it. I shared some verses I'd read that morning in my own Bible.

He listened with unusual interest, so I explained from Scripture how to have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. By the time we got to the dealership, he wanted to pray, asking God for salvation — which he did.

That's when I understood why the Lord had allowed someone to steal my catalytic converter — it had set off a chain reaction that led to the young

man's salvation.

Bad things happen all the time, but what if you knew that every gloomy thing would lead to glorious results under the guiding providence of God?

That's what Paul told the Philippians. They were distressed at all that had happened to him — the loss of his fourth missionary journey, his imprisonment in Caesarea, his shipwreck on Malta, and his looming trial in Rome. But Paul wasn't gloomy in the least. He said:

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear. — Philippians 1:12–14

This is the Philippian version of Romans 8:28, which says,

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. — NKJV

Problems can last a long time, but they can't last forever as God's promises do. We live in a world of catastrophes and calamities, and none of us knows what will happen next. Without God's oversight, our futures are like scraps of paper scattering in the wind. But under His oversight, they're like pages of hope indelibly written by grace. The Scriptures teach we have a God who turns problems inside out — all our perils and perplexities...

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What if you knew that every gloomy thing would lead to glorious results under the guiding providence of God?

In Christ, we have an ironclad, unfailing, all-encompassing, God-given guarantee that every single circumstance in life will sooner or later turn out well for those committed to Him.

Perhaps something has happened to you that has taken the wind out of your sails, the bounce out of your step, the twinkle out of your eye, and the joy out of your heart. Our circumstances must bow before Jesus. We may not be able to control them, and chaos may seem to reign. But the Savior who turned water into wine and death into life can bring about a mutation, a transfiguration, a reversal, an evolution of our circumstances. The Savior can turn our circumstances into His servants for the advancement of His kingdom.

This is part of redemption.

How did Paul's adversity serve to advance the gospel? In two ways. First, he was chained to soldiers twenty-four hours a day. He always seemed to be on good terms with the soldiers protecting him, and he shared his message with them. They were a captive audience — not only did he speak to them directly, but they heard his conversations with others and they listened as he prayed.

The imperial guard was made up of about ten thousand of Rome's best soldiers. They served under the direct command of Nero to protect him, to provide a police presence in Rome, and to do his bidding throughout the empire. Paul's converts among these soldiers took the gospel to far-flung

regions he could never have gone himself.

What appeared to be Paul's tragedy was really God's strategy.

Second, Paul's circumstances had a bracing effect on the church. We can see how this works, can't we? When you read of the courage of a Christian facing persecution in an oppressive land — when they stand bravely for Christ despite threats and intimidations — doesn't it encourage you to be bolder and more outspoken in your faith?

Gloomy thoughts come from the way we interpret the happenings of our lives. Paul knew that every single circumstance was under the providence, the sovereignty, and the control of Jesus Christ, who had turned an occupied tomb into an empty grave. He knew that everything worked together for the good of those who love God and are living according to His purposes. He could even see some of the benefits God was bringing about.

The things that happen to us have a divine way of actually turning out for our good and for the furtherance of the gospel. In His own way and time, the Lord reverses adversity, overrides misfortune, and dismantles the devil's schemes.

He will do this for you.

1. Orison Swett Marden, *Everybody Ahead: Or, Getting the Most Out of Life* (New York: Frank E. Morrison Publisher, 1916), 310–312.
2. Andrew Brunson, *God's Hostage* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2019), 208.
3. The last word of the verse is my own paraphrase. The niv uses the word "wasteland."
4. Frank Laubach, *Prayer: The Mightiest Force in the World* (Burtyrki Books, 2020), 12 and passim.
5. Words by Joel Hemphill

Written for Devotionals Daily by Robert J. Morgan, author of [*Whatever Happens: How to Stand Firm in Your Faith When the World Is Falling Apart*](#).

Ready to Dig Deeper?

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Your Turn

Sometimes we get to see the redemption that can come from our lives' hardships; sometimes we don't. Whatever you are going through right now, confess to God your trust in His sovereignty. Ask Him to give you the faith to believe in His goodness, even if you find yourself doubting it. Invite Him to show you the way through the difficulty with grace, hope, and trust, so that gloomy thoughts are not controlling thoughts in your life. ~ Devotionals Daily

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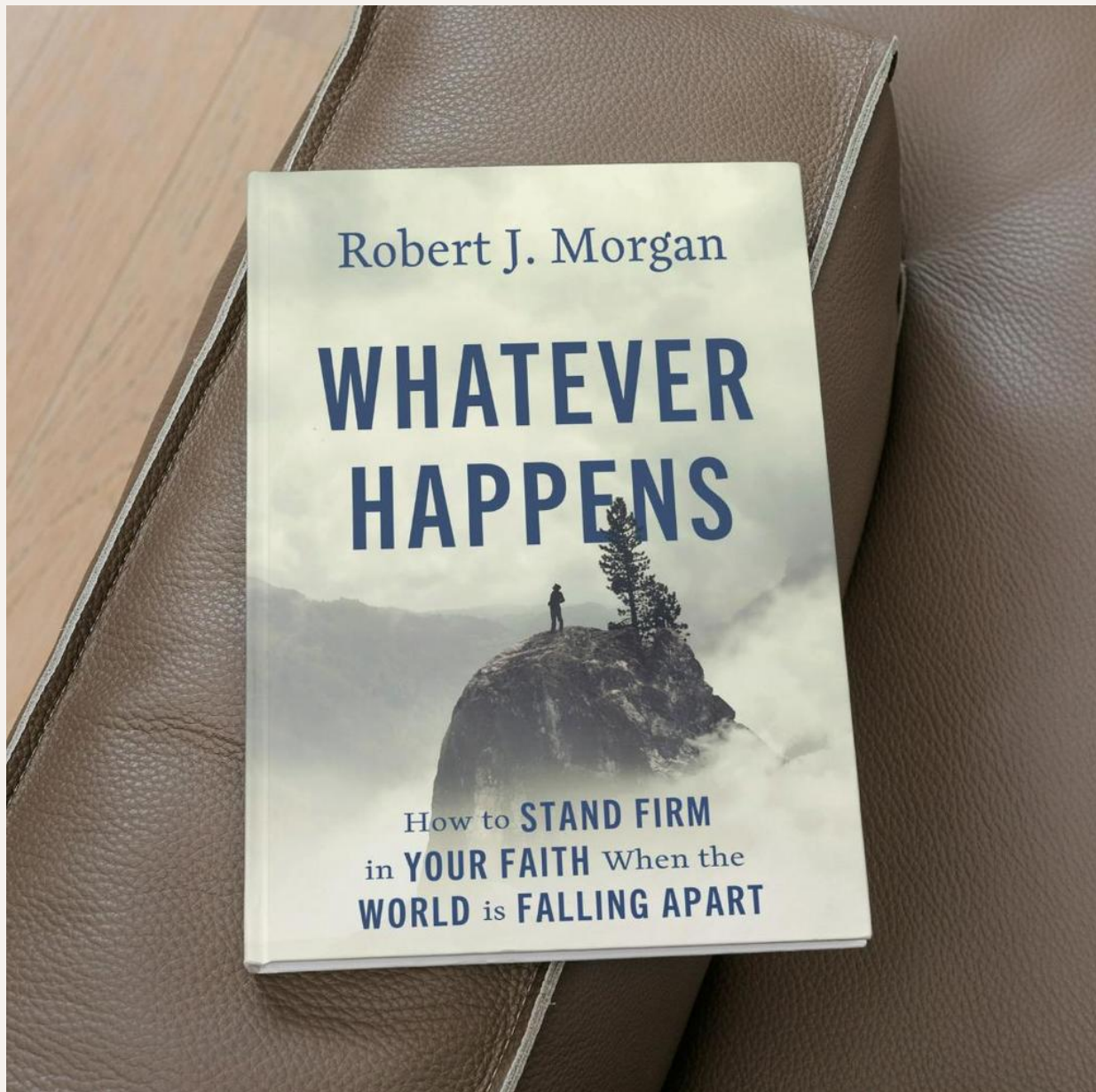
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Life is unpredictable, and the world is unstable. People have never been so

Life is unpredictable, and the world is unstable. People have never been so confounded, sensing our culture, economy, and geopolitical systems are spiraling downward. Even in our personal lives, none of us knows what will happen next—which is why God gave us the book of Philippians. This short letter—just over 100 verses—can help us learn to live overflowing lives in an overwhelming world.

Philippians is one of the most practical books of the Bible, which Robert Morgan says is as fresh as ever. Its theme can be summed up in these verses: "Whatever happens, conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then . . . I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you" (1:27–28).

As the apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians from a prison cell, he was facing dire circumstances and an unsettled future. Would he be released or executed? But he knew one thing—that *whatever happened*, he was going to stand firm in his faith and live a life worthy of the gospel. And no matter what we are going through today, we can do the same.

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Today's devotion is by:



Robert J. Morgan

Take a look inside



Among the many lessons in [Whatever Happens](#), readers will learn how to:

- Use prayer to energize their life
- Make today about others
- Stay as cheerful as possible in all circumstances
- Let others lean on their strength
- Start everything with praise and end everything with prayer