

“Life Goes On”

By Howard Thurman

During these turbulent times we must remind ourselves repeatedly that life goes on.

This we are apt to forget.

The wisdom of life transcends our wisdoms; the purpose of life outlasts our purposes; the process of life cushions our processes.

The mass attack of disillusion and despair, distilled out of the collapse of hope, has so invaded our thoughts that what we know to be true and valid seems unreal and ephemeral. There seems to be little energy left for aught but futility.

This is the great deception.

By it whole peoples have gone down to oblivion without the will to affirm the great and permanent strength of the clean and the commonplace.

Let us not be deceived.

It is just as important as ever to attend to the little graces by which the dignity of our lives is maintained and sustained.

Birds still sing; the stars continue to cast their gentle gleam over the desolation of the battlefields, and the heart is still inspired by the kind word and the gracious deed.

There is no need to fear evil.

There is every need to understand what it does, how it operates in the world, what it draws upon to sustain itself.

We must not shrink from the knowledge of the evilness of evil.

Over and over we must know that the real target of evil is not destruction of the body, the reduction to rubble of cities; the real target of evil is to corrupt the human spirit and to give the soul the contagion of inner disintegration.

When this happens, there is nothing left, the very citadel of the human being is captured and laid waste.

Therefore, the evil in the world around us must not be allowed to move from without to within.

This would be to be overcome by evil.

To drink in the beauty that is within reach, to clothe one's life with simple deeds of kindness, to keep alive a sensitiveness to the movement of the spirit of God in the quietness of the human heart and in the workings of the human mind— this is as always the ultimate answer to the great deception.