

## Its Rightful Owner

*A smile is the shortest distance between two people.*

Victor Borge

I spent twenty years at Bastrop Federal Prison and didn't open up to the friendship around me until the last few years. My past crimes included assaults and escapes, and for the first fifteen years, I was known as one of the coldest, most hardened criminals in the system.

One morning while I was in the hallway, a prison psychologist, Dr. Geraldine Nagy, stepped out of her office and almost bumped into my 275 pounds of brutal hostility. As we made eye contact, a smile appeared on her face. "Good morning, David," she said, as she stuck out her hand. I was dumbstruck that she knew my name; I had never gone near her office.

I managed to say, "Good morning," as I shook her hand.

Dr. Nagy walked down the hall, then turned back and said, "Do you ever smile?"

"Yeah," I answered, "sometimes."

"Find somebody you feel comfortable with, and try it today." She smiled, waved and walked away.

Dr. Nagy's moment of kindness toward me that day helped change my life. I took her advice and the smiles led to friendships—and ultimately to a pivotal, permanent change in me.

After twenty years in prison, I'm now free and successful. Practicing random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty helped hand my life back to its rightful owner—me.

David Smith

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ON WISDOM

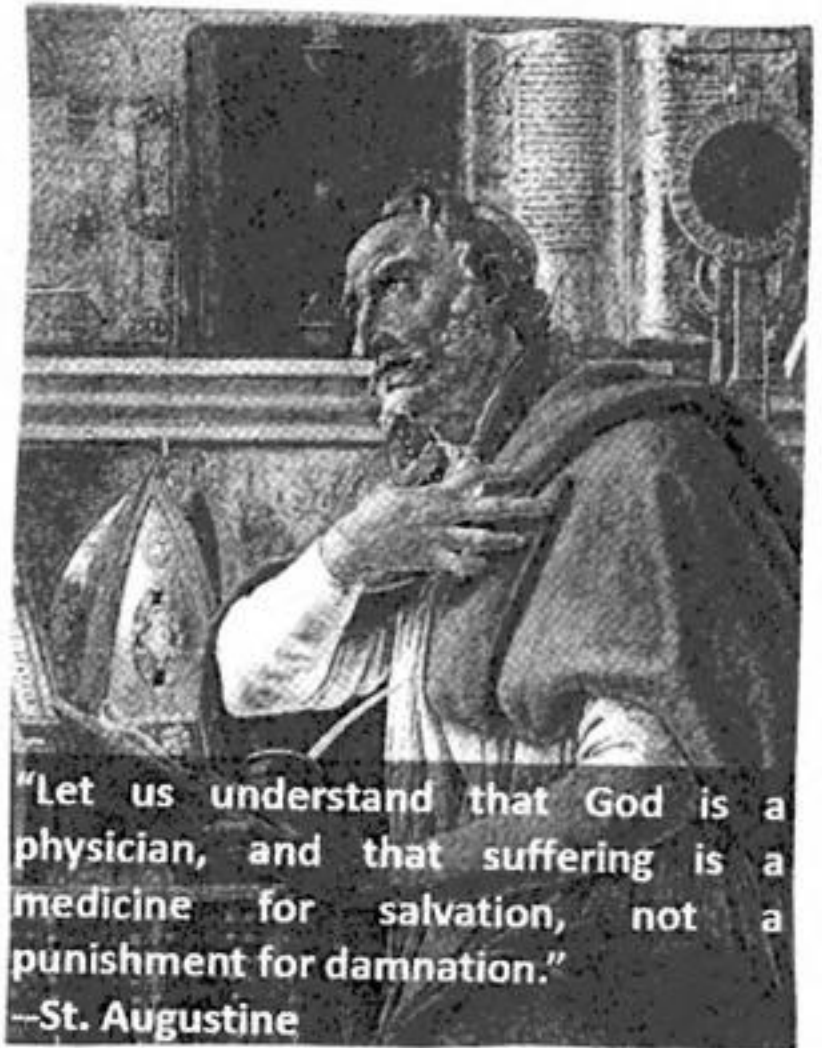
I'd pretend to be rugged, so fast and so cool  
When actually lost like a blinded old fool.  
I'm getting too old for this tiresome game  
Of acting real hard with no sense of shame.

It's time that I change and get on with my life,  
Fulfilling my dreams for a family and wife.  
What my future will hold I really don't know,  
But the years that I've wasted are starting to show.

I just live for the day when I'll get a new start  
And the dreams I still hold deep in my heart.  
I hope I can make it, I at least have to try  
Because I'm heading toward death, and I don't want to die.

Dave LeFave

BY: LEON IRBY DATED: JUNE 14, 2015



**"Let us understand that God is a physician, and that suffering is a medicine for salvation, not a punishment for damnation."  
—St. Augustine**



### Mail Call

Darkness and loneliness fill my cell  
With pain and fear too great to yell.

I wait for the mailman to deliver to me  
As I wipe away tears that no one will see.

I pray so sincere with head raised above,  
"Please, God, soon send a letter of love."

I long to gaze upon pages so dear,  
With riches to bring my loved ones near.

Words of diamonds on pages of gold  
A message from heaven as their story is told,

"We love you, miss you, pray you'll be free."  
A treasure-filled envelope just for me.

Please bring memories of joys I once knew  
Family, friends and things I would do.

The darkness and pain of my cell will prevail  
As my name, again, was not called for mail.

John M. D...

## Hope

Hope in every situation,  
Unexpected places share  
Grace and power when thus needed;  
Joy is conquering despair.  
Don't give up – forge on the battle –  
Life gives more, a corner turned  
Showers o'er the true intention  
And leads not to triumphs spurned.

Hope in every situation;  
Brightly, confidence we see  
Glorious outcomes in the finals  
When we put our trust in Thee.

Ruthmarie Brooks Silver

We who give Him praises  
Know the meaning of pure love;  
We accept that the beginning  
Was a gift from God, above.  
It's not some seed that sprouted  
From an ancient ocean bed,  
To evolve to higher life forms,  
As scientists have said.

We who seek His perfectness  
Should truly understand  
That we can't find perfection  
From the lies that come from man.  
We put our trust in Jesus Christ  
That, with faith in Him, we'll find,  
That we will comprehend His truth  
In heart, and soul, and mind.

Nancy Watson Dodrill

*"Frequently people think compassion and love are merely sentimental. No! They are very demanding. If you are going to be compassionate, be prepared for action."*

**ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU,**  
Nobel Peace Prize winner

*"We thank you, Lord, for happy hearts, for warm and sunny weather. We thank you, Lord, for this our food, and that we are together."*

**PEG MATTES**  
Ida, Michigan

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