

The Most Selfish Thing in the World

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How do you intentionally go missing for a period of 16 years, letting your wife and five kids think you're dead, only to reappear and share your story on ABC's 20/20? It's simple. You turn up gay with your lover.

Eric Myers had married his high school sweetheart, Anne, and they had two daughters and then adopted three Vietnamese boys. When they went through marital difficulties, they chose not to divorce because of their Christian faith.

Then, on a business trip, Eric became discouraged and decided to get away for a few days and unwind, not saying a word to Anne. The days became weeks, then a month, then four months, at which time he met Sean Lung and started a new life with his gay partner, completely abandoning his wife and kids.

It's hard to imagine the trauma his family lived with. When is Daddy coming home? Where is he? What happened to him? How many nights of agony and torment did Anne experience?

Eventually, Eric was declared legally dead, and the family collected \$800,000 in life insurance, meaning he avoided all detection as he and Sean traveled the world together.

His daughter Kirsten, as reported by the *Daily Mail*, "was only 8-years-old when her father left and remembers crying herself to sleep every night, and screaming that she wanted him back.

...

"She retreated to alcohol at age 11 and found that it made her

feel better. She only quit drinking to comfort her mother who she describes as 'one of the most selfless people I've ever met.'"

These were the devastating effects of life without dad.

As for Eric, who recently chose to emerge from his secret life "since living in disguise is a 'horrible prison'," he now confesses, "I cannot say anything to deny that this is the most selfish thing in the world," explaining—as if the thought would have crossed anyone's mind—"I will never be painted as a saint."

And, perhaps finding the ugliness of his actions too much to own up to, he states, "But no one is all good, and no one is all bad," an unnecessary caveat if ever there was one.

What about his coming to terms with his homosexuality? Wasn't that a valid excuse for leaving his wife and children?

After all, wasn't New Jersey Gov. Jim McGreevey hailed for his courage when he announced that he was gay, confessed to an affair with another man, and resigned from office, all with his faithful wife at his side?

Within a year, McGreevey and his wife were separated and he was living with his partner, Mark O'Donnell, only to commemorate his supposed bravery and grace in his book *The Confession*, billed as being "among the most honest political memoirs ever written."

Somehow, I don't recall former Gov. Elliot Spitzer or former Rep. Anthony Weiner getting the same treatment as did McGreevey. But after all, they didn't fool around with other men. Their indiscretions were with other women, a fact they are constantly reminded of as they both run for mayor of New York City.

A decade before McGreevey's announcement, Dr. Mel White—a

husband, father, grandfather, seminary professor, pastor, member of the religious right and ghostwriter for Christian leaders like Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Billy Graham—shocked the evangelical world by leaving his wife and declaring his homosexuality, taking up residence with his partner, Gary Nixon.

White has been hailed as a bold spiritual pioneer, becoming one of the nation's leading gay activists, even challenging Rev. Falwell in an open letter, calling on him to renounce his alleged religious bigotry.

But Falwell would not be intimidated, responding with his own open letter, in which he acknowledged to White, "You have written of your many attempts to conquer your inordinate affections early in your life. I do not doubt your sincerity nor the pain you have endured in the process. But this is also irrelevant. ... Moral behavior, like all human conduct, is a choice."

Falwell continued, "Millions of godly and pure individuals have chosen to be single and celibate for life. They have determined to have no sexual relationship, heterosexual or homosexual, for a lifetime. Millions more have been widowed early in life and have chosen to remain unmarried and chaste for the remainder of their lives. Because we are human beings, and not animals, we have the God-given capacity to govern our conduct, regardless our passions and feelings."

Yes, this holds true even when it comes to homosexuality!

"Therefore, Mel," Falwell wrote, "there can be no justification for you allowing your passions and feelings to cause you to abandon your wife and family for a male lover, as you have done. The fact that your dear wife is 'understanding,' and does not hate you, in no way vindicates what you have done to her. This simply speaks to her character and the genuineness of her personal relationship with Christ."

Eric Myers' daughter Kirsten also finds no justification for her father's actions.

Now the married mother of two, she says, "I know how much I love my children, and if he loved me even half as much as I loved them, there would be no situation where he would even think that it was OK to leave me."

And so, the *Daily Mail* reports, "Kirsten doesn't believe that her father's sexual orientation is an excuse for his disappearance. 'I know a lot of people who would never do this ... absolutely never blame it on their homosexuality.'"

That is the language of love.

As a heterosexual, I don't claim to understand the inner turmoil that Myers or McGreevey or White lived with, but I do understand this: The commitment to love your wife and your children trumps your sexual desires and romantic attractions, and to destroy your family for the sake of those desires is, indeed, "the most selfish thing in the world."

But in today's upside-down society, that selfishness is "understood" and even commended if you're gay.

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