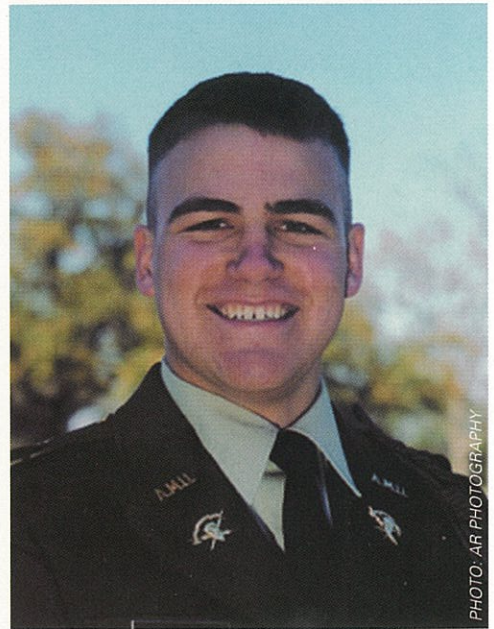


Jerry Don Self

Always Involved



Jerry Self, the son of Michael and Jacquelyn Self, devoted his life to Christ. He was known and respected for being kind and compassionate toward others.

He was a natural leader.

And these, say those friends who knew him best, were only some of the qualities that made Jerry Self a true Aggie in every sense of the word.

During his years at Lamar High School in Arlington, he had gained a reputation for volunteering.

He felt that was one of his missions in life.

He would do whatever needed to be done, whenever it needed to be done.

He was proud to stand tall and show his Aggie Spirit which meant he also found time to become involved in a myriad of student activities.

In addition to being on the student council his senior year, he was in the Spanish club, on the track team and on the varsity football team.

Jerry Self worked hard.

As an offensive lineman, he dedicated himself to getting the most out of his talent. He was the kind of player—the kind of person—that coaches could count on when it came time to play the game, that teachers could count on in the classroom.

“You always ask, ‘Why do things like this happen to a good kid like Jerry?’ But those are the kids that always get in and get involved,” said Gayle Nelson, a Lamar teacher who was also Jerry’s student council sponsor.

As a junior at Texas A&M, Jerry, according to Darwyn Fowler, his step-grandfather, was planning to become an electrical engineer after spending time in the Air Force.

He was delighted to be a part of Bonfire and was out there on the stack every night. But then, Jerry Self could be counted on.

“Jerry just had a real love for life,” said Jeremy Erb, a pastor who worked with Self at the Mid-City Bible Church in Euless, “And he loved being an Aggie.

“He loved being part of the A&M culture.

“He loved the Traditions and was proud to be a part of them.”

Jerry had lived with the Erb family during the summers while mentoring students at their church. He had even talked to Erb about the possibility of his joining the ministry.

In high school, Jerry embraced everyone and everything. “He never met a stranger,” Erb said. “He had the ability talk to anybody and be their best friend in five minutes. He was the consummate gentleman.”

Erb laughs as he remembers young Self. “Every time I got in the car with him, I was scared for my life,” he said. “He loved to sing country music really loud and, unfortunately, really badly. He was like a brother to me.”

“Jerry put Jesus Christ at the single-most forefront of everything he did,” said friend Jeff Wiesener at his funeral. “I have never come across anyone as madly, passionately, head-over-heels, deeply in love with his savior.”

“I know if he could see us all crying for him, he’d call us sissies and beat us up a little bit,” said former football teammate Beau Riley during his eulogy, “But that was Jerry.”

Riley speculated that once he died and appeared at the gates of Heaven, his friend would be there waiting for him, probably with a wisecrack.

“He’ll say, ‘What took you so long?’”

Riley knew he would forever miss his friend, but he didn’t want anyone to feel sorry for Jerry Self.

“Jerry’s in Heaven,” he said, “And it’s just like him to not let us know what it’s like up there.”