

Opposing Al Capone

Everybody has a sphere of influence, which means there are eyes constantly watching you and emulating you – to one degree or another, for good or for bad. That can be a scary thought.

Charles Swindoll, pastor and founder of *Insight for Living* in Plano, Texas, gives a good illustration of that truth, telling a story of the Rev. Bruce Larson in his book *Living Above the Level of Mediocrity*.

The Rev. Larson was pastor of University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, Washington, and later was co-pastor of the Crystal Cathedral in California.

When Larson was a small boy, he attended church every Sunday at a big Gothic Presbyterian Church in Chicago.

“The preaching was powerful and the music was great,” he said. “But for me, the most awesome moment in the morning service was the offertory, when 12 solemn, frock-coated ushers marched in lock-step down the main aisle to receive the brass plates for collecting the offering.



“These men, so serious about their business of serving the Lord in this magnificent house of worship, were the business and professional leaders of Chicago,” Larson said.

One of the 12 ushers was a man named Frank Loesch. “He was not a very impressive-looking man,” Larson said, “but in Chicago, he was living legend, for he was the man who had stood up to Al Capone (American gangster in Chicago). In the Prohibition years, Capone’s rule was absolute. The local and state police and even the Federal Bureau of Investigation were afraid to oppose him.”

But single-handedly, Frank Loesch, as a Christian layman and without any government support, determined to take Capone to court and put him away, Larson said.

“During the months that the Chicago Crime Commission (an organization of which Loesch was a founder) met, Frank Loesch’s life was in constant danger. There were threats on the lives of his family and friends. But he never wavered.”

Ultimately, Larson added, Loesch won the case against Capone and was the instrument “for removing this blight from the City of Chicago.”

(more)

“Frank Loesch had risked his life to live out his faith,” Larson said. “Each Sunday at this point of the service, my father, a Chicago businessman himself, never failed to poke me and silently point to Frank Loesch with pride. Sometimes, I’d catch a tear in my father’s eye. For my Dad and for all of us, this was and is what authentic living is all about.”

Actions speak louder than words. This proverb is found in many languages, including ancient Greek.

It definitely applies to those who are leaders in Life Care and Century Park – and since you are reading this, it is for you – as those around you will observe if your behavior lines up with what you say. If it does, you earn the respect and loyalty of the people you lead.

Being an example? It is, indeed, a scary thought. But it should also be a motivator – because of what it enables you to achieve.

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Timothy 4:12 KJV).

– Beecher Hunter