

## Service Limits

"Service Limit"

### Examples

I read a column by Trey Canard this morning in the latest Racer X magazine, and it got me to thinking about examples. We sometimes set examples when we least expect it. We may not even know it. And the impression it leaves on another person or persons may be beyond our own ability to imagine. I'll give you two examples that pop into my mind.

Many years ago I was working on a construction site. I was 16 years old and looking to fit in with all the older, cool guys that I looked up to. One in particular was Mark. Mark was one bad dude! All the other guys looked up to him and gave him his due respect. Mark was a massive man. He told me his father had made him carry sacks of cement up ladders when he was a kid. I once saw him lift the back wheels of a car off the ground! I looked up to him as an idol, someone to aspire to. Different women all the time, fast cars, cool motorcycles, no respect for authority, and fear of no man. Maybe he felt sorry for the skinny kid they gave him as a helper, I don't know, but he took me under his wing and made sure nobody messed with me.

I once saw Mark jump his Kawasaki 350 Bighorn over a huge pile of dirt on the jobsite at lunch. He landed with a crash and the frame broke in half right in front of the gas tank. He went over the bars and tumbled a long way down the hill he had meant to safely land on. As all the other guys rushed to see if he was okay, Mark pushed them away and stood up. He said a few choice words, picked up the two pieces of his motorcycle, now only connected by the various control cables, and carried them to a co-worker's truck. He tossed them in the back like toys and continued his foul opinion of the broken Kaw.

I went to his home one afternoon to return something I had borrowed. I had my girlfriend with me, and she stayed in the car as I took the tool back to Mark inside where he was drinking beer with a group of friends. They all wanted to meet my girlfriend. I did not want this. Mark grabbed me by the shoulder and tossed me across the room onto a couch and told me to mellow out. They all got up and headed towards the door to see the cute little 15-year-old in the passenger seat. They stumbled out with me trailing behind. As they reached the door, Mark turned and punched the guy behind him in the chest so hard that it knocked the rest of us down too! "Don't none of you say nothin' nasty around his little girlie friend, you hear?" And they all just mumbled yes.

Mark was in a bar one night later that summer, and one of his drinking buddies started a fight with some guy. The other guy was winning and Mark stepped in to help. Faced with the massive newcomer, the other guy pulled a pistol and shot Mark through the hand. Mark took away the gun and totally demolished the guy that had shot him. He turned around with raised fists and a roar of victory, only to find that the bullet had passed through his hand and killed his buddy. To an impressionable 16-year-old, this was like comic book superhero stuff! He probably did not mean to do it, but during that summer, Mark molded and shaped my attitudes and actions for many years to come.

Not too long ago I was with a young friend of mine. The friend in question is a genuinely good kid. He loves the Lord and is on the right path. He and I tease each other good-naturedly all the time. On the way to a riding destination, he put in a CD by some group I had only heard of and knew nothing about. The music was okay, but nothing special. He enjoys it when I react to his goofy music, and when he sees that I don't like it, he turns it up and laughs. And that's okay too. I can deal with it. But at that particular moment, there were two younger kids in the back of the vehicle. They both look up to my young friend as someone they want to emulate. So the song on the CD reaches a point where it gets quiet, and he reaches for the volume knob. At around 50,000 decibels, a voice comes on and starts shouting a string of filthy words just for the purpose of shocking people. I frowned and shook my head. He laughed and turned it down again, and we would have gone on about our day if I had not heard the two kids in the back laughing about the guy cussing on the CD. It hit me at that moment, now they

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think this clown on the CD is cool!

Such minor actions like my friend's CD filth, or the major ones like Mark's lifestyle, influence people we may not even know about. So be on guard. Make sure the example you set is a good one, one that's gonna make God proudly point at you, and say, "That's one of my boys!"