

REFLECTING on the Boss

MORE THAN A FEW YEARS AGO our desperately anticipated water line was laid and connected. After eight years of struggles and battles with our well, after eight years of an inconstant supply of slightly tinted water from the tap, we were, at last, connected to a more dependable, cleaner supply of the essential liquid.

Although I was the one who laid and connected the five hundred feet of pipe from the road, up the steep hill of our north field, and across our front lawn to the house, the job required professionals to dig the deep trench in which the pipe would reside.

Nothing is simple out here in the wilds. The digging of the five-foot-deep trench required a massive trencher, two large backhoes, and an even larger beast that was brought in to break up and remove the huge slabs of underground limestone that blocked its path. In all it took seven men and all that machinery to dig the path for the two-inch pipe I laid.



When the job was finally done—after the trench had been covered over, and all that remained of the visiting machinery were the rutted tracks on either side—what impressed me even more than the prospect of having clean water, was the work of the men who dug the trench for the pipe.

Every one of them was a good worker. Every one of them set to whatever task was at hand with dedication and vigor. Not one of them was afraid to pitch in and help, to jump down off a machine and help dig by hand. No prima donnas, no slackers—just men who worked hard for their day's wage, and were eager to do the best job they could.

And I realized how their work and attitudes spoke well of their boss, for the attitude and quality of anyone's work usually flows down from the top. If a manager is a slacker with a bad attitude toward customers, his or her employees will be infected with that same behavior. By contrast, if a manager shows integrity, dependability and courtesy, his or her employees will invariably adopt those same qualities. As to the work being performed by the men in our front field, the high quality of workmanship and dedication to the job at hand left me with greater respect not just for them, but for the one who assigned their work and paid their wages.



Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

1 Peter 2:11-12

For Christians, every job we do, every word we say to a neighbor, every revelation of our mental attitude reflects back on our Boss. The unredeemed world knows of Jesus Christ first through the behavior of His followers. When we demonstrate a high work ethic, it reflects favorably on the One in charge; when we are lazy, grumble through the task, or do our work in a slipshod manner, it reflects badly on the One in charge.

The Christian walk does not consist of isolated moments disengaged from real life. It does not take place in the rarefied atmosphere of the mountaintop cloister. The Christian walk is played out on the broken sidewalks of the inner city and the neighborhood playground, at the Interstate truck stop and the grocery store, at the laundromat and in the aisles of Wal-Mart, in the high school gymnasium and study hall, from either side of the counter at Burger King.

Everywhere we are, we are being observed. And when it is known that we are followers of Jesus, for good or bad our actions reflect on Him.

The men who dug the trench for my water line brought honor to their boss through their diligent and professional work. Their behavior showed that the one in charge of their time, the one who paid their wages, was a person of character, and worthy of trust.

When we perform our assigned tasks well we bring honor to our Boss—the Lord Jesus. When we are courteous and patient around others; when we demonstrate that we can be trusted with responsibility; when we do our work—no matter how menial—with excellence; when we are honest and dependable, and work hard for our

wage—when we do our work with integrity we reflect well upon the Foreman who is in charge of our lives.

The One who pays our salary.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:14-16