

A Septic Tank Hole View

Septic tanks helped educate me. With his friend's help, my dad buried a septic tank behind our new, small Oregon house. When you bury septic tanks, you don't expect to see them again. Constant rain, however, saturated the soil causing the empty tank to pop up overnight like a life preserver. That buoyancy lesson gave my dad backaches.

When I went out for the football team, septic tanks taught me another lesson. Some high school athletes conditioned themselves by working at physically demanding summer jobs. As the foreman on a house construction job, my sister's husband helped me find employment. I felt honored to work with the carpenters and experienced young men. I hammered nails, found materials for the carpenters, and lifted boards to them. They even let me saw boards—until I cut some too short. Bob sawed no more; they *lowered* me to digging a septic tank hole—solo.

Dry, flinty soil resisted my shovel. Rocks rattled my pick and bruised my hands. When I dug with the shovel, it seemed the pick might work better. After a couple of painful swings, I'd go back to the shovel. For days I dug alone and out of sight. Much of my time, I spent contemplating "better" ways to dig holes. Occasionally, the frustrated contractor arrived to look down on my costly, slow progress.

After I finished that project, the boss assigned me to a new building site under a different foreman. Soon I was digging another hole. I sweated and chafed down there one day. Al, the foreman, worked nearby. "Bob, I'm going to dig for a while. Get out of that hole and nail these boards for me," he said. On top, out of the corner of my eye, I watched that elderly man laboring hard, his generous sweat dripping into the soil. Jesus demonstrated the absolute *ultimate* of Al's sacrificial love: **"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins," I John 4:10 NIV.** Thank God for his love. *Bob Blair*