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"The work praises the man." The work absolutely can't praise the man because if it did, you could look at your neighbor's yard and, if his yard looked great, you could say, "Wow! He is a great man!" His good yard work doesn't tell you if he is encouraging kind or honest.

Do not boast about your work. Someone else usually does it better than you, so don't speak of your achievements. Let others speak of your achievements instead.

Here is part of a Bible story: [Luke 16] There was a rich man that had really nice clothes, ate well, and had good stuff. There was also a poor man named Lazarus who lay at the rich man's gate and begged. He had sores all over him which the dogs licked. Eventually Lazarus died and the angels carried him up to heaven, and eventually the rich man died and was carried by demons to hell. The rich man was in pain and could see Lazarus in heaven far away.

This Bible story shows the Irish saying isn't true because I'll bet the rich man had to work to get rich and yet he went to hell. After his death the rich man's work wasn't good enough to get him to heaven. So the Bible even says the work doesn't praise the man. Lazarus went to heaven, so even though Lazarus's work wasn't good enough on earth to make much money, God sent him to heaven.

Slaves work pretty much all the time and I don't think very many slaves get praised. In fact I don't think I've ever heard of a slave being praised.

One more example of why this proverb isn't true would be a beautiful bridge on the News channel that you saw, and the News reporter said that it was built by one person. So that just says that the person is a great bridge builder. It doesn't say he's a good man, does it? No.