

Series	The Rest of the Week
Bible	Matthew 6:24; other texts
Title/Topic	The Dark Side of Work
Overview	<p>Because of sin, work itself can become a false god. The world tells us that a major part of our identity (if not our entire identity) is found in our work and what our work allows us to accumulate. As a result of this and where it leads, we can easily find ourselves worshiping the god of Mammon—or trying to worship God and Mammon at the same time, something Jesus said we can't possibly do (see Matt. 6:24). How do we avoid this trap? By understanding the dark side of work and being aware of when we are potentially getting caught in its grip. Ultimately, we need to remember that God is our ultimate provider. He's the one in control, not us.</p>
Scripture Breakdown	<p>WHAT IS THE DARK SIDE OF WORK?</p> <p>1) Work becomes dark when we work because we want to accumulate treasures on earth (Matthew 6:19,21; 1 John 2:15-17).</p> <p>We can easily find ourselves punching the clock in order to simply accumulate more stuff. Sometimes, we do this in order to make ourselves look good or prosperous in the eyes of those around us. Sometimes, we do this to make ourselves feel secure or like we have finally “made it.”</p> <p>Jesus said that this should be avoided because every treasure that we lay up here on earth (the material things we accumulate) will eventually be destroyed by moth and rust (Matt. 6:19). In other words, we can't take it with us when we pass from this life.</p> <p>Jesus also warns that it is very easy for our hearts to get wrapped up in our treasures instead of in the One who allowed us to accumulate those treasures in the first place (Matt. 6:21). Wherever our treasure is, our hearts will quickly follow.</p> <p>2) Work becomes dark when we work because we want to become rich (1 Timothy 6:9).</p> <p>Call this the American dream or whatever we wish. When we work out of the desire to become rich, we are missing God's design for work. When we are chasing a certain dollar amount in our bank account, we aren't working according to God's design for us.</p> <p>We're told in Scripture that this will lead us into a very dangerous slope. 1 Timothy 6:9 informs us that this slope consists of four steps in the wrong</p>

	<p>direction: first temptation, then a snare, followed by senseless and harmful desires, and then ultimately ruin and destruction.</p> <p>3) Work becomes dark when we fail to keep in mind who we actually work for and represent (Colossians 3:23-24).</p> <p>It's easy to forget who our ultimate boss is. When we punch the clock, we are not only working for a company or a particular person, but we are ultimately working for the Lord. As a result of this, we should work heartily as unto the Lord, remembering that it is ultimately the Lord who will reward us.</p> <p>When we fail to remember this, it will be easy to work begrudgingly. We will loathe Mondays (or whatever day starts your week). We will be counting down the minutes until the weekend starts. We will fail to see the blessing of being God's representative in the workplace (more on this in Part 4 of this series). We will fail to give 100% effort at our jobs.</p> <p>4) Work becomes dark when what we do becomes our sole identity and sense of purpose (1 John 3:1).</p> <p>In 1 John 3:1, we're told that we are children of God. This is our main identity, and our purpose is to glorify our Father by following and trusting him wherever he may lead.</p> <p>This means that our identity and purpose are not ultimately tied to a particular job title or position. When we understand this, we will more easily avoid the trap of workaholism and the byproducts of it. When we understand this, we will also be less uneasy when it comes time to leave a job or position (either forcefully because of layoffs, etc., or voluntarily under God's direction) simply because we remember that we are God's children and He, as our Father, we prove to be our ultimate provider.</p>
Gospel	<p>God doesn't want our identity and purpose to be wrapped up in our jobs, accomplishments, material things, or anything else that is earthly. If we do this, we will succumb to the dark side of work and find ourselves empty. He wants our identity to be in him—a gift that is offered freely. When we trust in Jesus, we declare that our identity is in no one or anything else other than the Lord. Will you trust in Jesus today?</p>
Next Steps	<p>The next time you punch the clock, what needs to shift in your attitude based on this message? Maybe you need to review Colossians 3:23-24 every day before you step into the office, warehouse, factory, etc.</p>

If you have any questions or need assistance, you can email me at jasonp@newlifechicago.org.