

THE JESUS WAY: Courageous Integrity!

Scripture used: [Matthew 7:3-5 \(NIV\)](#); [Psalm 139:23-24 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Executive Pastor Tilden Fang challenged us to pursue courageous integrity in a world shaped by hypocrisy, image management, and compromise. Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount that the real issue is not just the failures of others, but the “planks” in our own eyes—hidden identities, pride, and fears that quietly shape how we live. Pastor Tilden shared personally that much of his identity growing up was built around being a top student and a respectful child. Although these appeared to be good qualities, they slowly fueled pride, judgment, and even dishonesty as he became more focused on protecting his image than living with integrity. Many of us do the same thing by building our worth on achievement, approval, wealth, or reputation. But through Jesus, God offers a new foundation. The cross transforms what once brought shame into something redeemed for His glory, and as we root our identity in Christ instead of the world, God grows us into people who can live with both truth and grace.

KEY POINTS

- 1. The bad news: we are living in an integrity crisis.** Pastor Tilden pointed to examples across business, politics, and even the Church where people compromise truth and character for power, profit, or image. Integrity means living consistently with our best and highest self, yet our culture constantly pressures us toward hypocrisy and self-preservation.
- 2. The worse news: the integrity crisis includes us.** Jesus says we all have “planks” in our eyes—deep identity structures that shape how we see ourselves and others. Many of us quietly build our worth on success, approval, wealth, or reputation, then justify compromise in order to protect those identities.
- 3. The good news: God can grow our integrity.** Pastor Tilden encouraged us to pray [Psalm 139:23-24 \(NIV\)](#), asking God to search our hearts and reveal hidden compromise. Integrity grows through humility, perseverance, prayer, and relationships that call us toward our highest self.
- 4. The best news: Jesus redeems what was broken.** Pastor Tilden reminded us that the cross itself was once a symbol of shame and oppression before Jesus transformed it into a symbol of redemption. In the same way, God can redeem our failures, wounds, and weaknesses, giving us a new identity in Him instead of the things of this world.

DISCUSSION

- 1) HEAR** - What “planks” or identities are shaping your sense of worth right now? Are there areas where protecting your image has become more important than honesty or integrity?
- 2) UNDERSTAND** - Read [Matthew 7:3–5](#). Why do you think Jesus addresses our own “planks” before speaking about the faults of others? What does this reveal about the condition of the human heart?
- 3) DO** - Memorize and pray [Psalm 139:23-24 \(NIV\)](#) every day this week. Ask God to reveal hidden compromise and strengthen your courage to live with integrity.