

# Pastors Rebuke Franklin Graham for Sins Against Christian Community

After Franklin Graham spoke boldly against the shooting of police officers, a group of pastors, theologians and professors are raising red flags.

They call his response “crude, insensitive and paternalistic.”

In his Facebook post, Graham said it all boils down to respect for authority—something younger generations tend to be lacking.

“If a police officer tells you to lay down face first with your hands behind your back, you lay down face first with your hands behind your back. It’s as simple as that. Even if you think the police officer is wrong—YOU OBEY,” Graham writes.

But the group who penned the open letter—including Rachel Held Evans; Gail Song Bantum, whose church bought the old Mars Hill Church building; and Efrem Smith, among others—say Graham has sinned against the Christian community at large.

“You have sinned against us, fellow members of the body of Christ. ... Your words hurt and influenced thousands. Therefore, we must respond publicly so that those you hurt might know you have received a reply and the hundreds of thousands you influenced might know that following your lead on this issue will break the body of Christ further,” they write.

For these Christian leaders, though, it’s not about publicly shaming the evangelist.

“Rev. Graham, as our brother in Christ and as a leader in the church, we forgive you and we pray that one day you will

recognize and understand the enduring legacy of the institution of race in our nation,” they write. “Now is the time for you to humbly listen to the cries of lamentation rising nationwide. We do not expect you to be an expert in racial issues, police brutality, or even the many factors that go in to our complicated and unjust criminal system. We do, however, expect you to follow the example of leaders and followers of Jesus throughout the scriptures and modern history. We expect you to seek wise counsel and guidance first from those who bear the weight of the injustice and second from other experts in the field.”

Graham, thus far, has not responded to the letter.

To read the full letter, [click here](#).