

# Stand by the Facts

by Ray Greenly

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*Ray Greenly's sermon urges believers to stand firm on the facts of Christ's sacrifice and to live a life of faith and humility in the face of personal loss and sin.*

**Duration:** 40:21

**Topics:** "Facts"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the temporary window of grace that is available to us. He warns that if we reject Jesus and treat his sacrifice as unholy, we will face severe punishment. The speaker urges listeners to surrender their lives to Jesus and accept his forgiveness. He emphasizes that the day of salvation is now, and tomorrow will be the day of judgment. The sermon also highlights the importance of allowing Jesus to remove sin from our lives, as our lives will be reviewed at the judgment.

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## Transcript

Almighty God, you've given us your word. I ask today if you would give us the grace to stand by that rather than our feelings or our perception of reality. Lord, you came and died on Calvary's tree.

That's a fact. Lord, give us the courage to stand by that fact. I pray in your mighty name.

Amen. My earliest memories of Mother, who was a tall, beautiful redhead, was that she would gather us as small children in the evening and read stories to us. I can't tell you how many hours she spent reading.

I've always marveled that she could read so long. When I became a parent, I tried to do that with my children and I just didn't have the ability to read so much. I would read one short book and say, now it's time to go to sleep.

Mother would read Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates or she would read Robin Hood or she would read Heidi or she would read some other book and it was always begging, would you read one more chapter, Mama? And she'd read one more chapter. I remember my mother taking walks in the woods with us, looking for the earliest spring flowers, hepaticas, skunk cabbage, bluets, spring beauties, myrtle, all the early spring flowers coming out and we would put them in books. We would press them with cellophane pages until I would have whole books of flowers beginning in the very earliest until the last one died in the fall.

The same with trees. Mother wasn't much of a cook. She could burn, I think, water but she still did her best and Dad would have to step in and do the rest.

She was an educated woman graduating from Wyoming State University with a degree in medical technology. She was a career woman. It wasn't until I was older that I realized what she'd been a career woman for.

It was her money that made the Christian education possible. Dad made enough money to cover all of the bills for the family. He covered all of the food and housing and transportation but it was Mom who stepped in with the Christian education piece.

She was in charge of a lab. I would go down with her to the lab and in those days she had to be dressed in white. It's always fascinating to see the change that would take place in my mother when she put on a uniform.

My mother cried very easily. If something happened that she was displeased with, her first response was to cry and immediately Dad stepped in. Immediately the boys knew, stop, don't make Mama cry.

There would be a penalty from Dad if we made Mama cry. I was amazed when I went to the lab and watched my mother work with cool efficiency, handling the toughest doctors. Arguments, disagreements, the cool professional.

Never a tear. I don't know how she did it. She turned them off at work and she turned them on at home.

Mom was a consummate professional. I have many wonderful memories of my mother. My heart was sad yesterday because we went to Hallmark.

I couldn't help but be looking for a Mother's Day card. But she's gone. Three years ago in June, Mother passed.

You know, I never imagined that my mother would die. She seemed old when I grew up and then she seemed ageless. I noticed that her red hair began to have more blonde in it.

It seemed to me that it never turned gray, just turned blonde. But I can't erase from my mind the picture of my mother in her bed after she died, before the undertakers came. It was raw.

I was blessed to be able to spend many hours with her before she passed, at her bedside with my sweetheart. We were able to say all the things we so desperately needed to say, telling her thank you. Thank you for the many kindnesses that she'd done.

And then she was gone. If I went back to Wyoming and went to Wyoming State University and asked about Orphan Mae Strauss, they'd say when she graduated, but she wouldn't be there. If I went to the old home in Laramie where we lived, someone else would live there.

If I went to Greenville, Pennsylvania where she and dad spent most of their life, someone else would live there. If I went up to the little graveyard, it'd be a tombstone. My mom's gone.

I don't have anywhere to write to her. I don't have anywhere to call her. I miss her.

There's something about losing mom that just put me on edge. Dad, he died. I understand that.

Moms aren't supposed to die. I'll tell you what it said to me. For everything, there is a time and a season.

If you still have your mother today, even if you're mad at her, get over it. Even if you're mad at her, get over it. She won't always be here.

If you've had to cross words with her, repent. She won't always be here. She too will soon be a tombstone where you go and remember.

Some of you have lost your mothers. You know what I'm talking about. I've been thinking about this a lot this week.

I read a passage in the scriptures. I want to read it to you. Hebrews, the 10th chapter, verse 18.

It's a scripture I didn't even have underlined. Suddenly it just leaped out of the page and pierced my heart. It says, and where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

Then there's another verse I want you to look at. Verse 26. If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left.

Jesus came. He died on a cross, but he's not on that cross now. If you went to Jerusalem today and you went out of town to Golgotha, there is no cross with Jesus on the cross.

He rose from that tomb. And when he rose from that tomb, the time for sacrifice ended. It's over.

He has done it. The sacrifice has been made for us. Well, pastor, I can't feel it.

Do you think your feelings establish reality? No. How many beginning pilots have flown their airplane into a cloud and been certain that they're so disoriented that they're flying upside down? But they look at the instrument and it says they're flying right side up. And so they reach out and they tap the instrument because they're sure the instrument is wrong.

And finally, they decide that the ultimate test of reality is their perception. And so they roll the airplane over, certain that they're flying upside down, called Virgo, and they crash. Many pilots have died this way.

Even experienced pilots have died this way because they thought their sense of reality was what they must trust. And so they died. When Jesus was finished with the cross, the sacrifice was finished.

The gift was made. If you look in Hebrews, the ninth chapter, verse 26, then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now, he has appeared once and for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself, just as man is destined to die once and after that to face the judgment.

So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people. And he will appear a second time, not to bear sins, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. So Jesus died once, and the purpose of his dying was not to cover your sin over, but to remove your sin, to remove it from your heart and your life, so that you would live a righteous life.

That's why we sing about and talk about the power of the blood, because it's the power in the blood of Jesus Christ that breaks all bondages, that breaks all bitterness of heart, that breaks all sorrowing of spirit. It's that blood that brings us full deliverance. It's the precious blood of Jesus.

It was offered once and for all. It is not being offered today. It has already been offered.

So just as my mother finished her life, Jesus finished his life on this earth and was resurrected. That's why I could go to my mother's funeral and preach her funeral sermon with tears and with great joy, because I knew that mother's life was finished on this earth, but she had a covenant with Jesus Christ and claimed the blood sacrifice of Jesus on that cross. And based on that blood sacrifice, she had the right to look forward with great joy to the resurrection day.

And I had an opportunity to preach it. And there's still joy in my heart over my mother's funeral. Now what I've given you are just the facts, but let me give you some more facts.

Verse 26, if we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Today we once more are in a temporary situation. There was a temporary situation where Jesus came and he died on Calvary.

He's not dying there now. He has died and now he has been raised to life. He is the resurrected Lord.

He is now residing in the heavenly tabernacle. He is seated at the right hand of the Father. And now we too are in a temporary situation.

We are in a situation that will not last forever. It is temporary. And during this momentary time of our life, we have an opportunity to reach back by faith to that crucifixion of Jesus and claim it as our own.

We have an opportunity to reach back to that sacrifice and say, by the blood of Jesus, I renounce my life. I renounce all of my hopes and all of my dreams. I renounce all ownership.

I give myself now wholly, completely, totally into the hands of the resurrected Christ who arose from that tomb. Or we have an opportunity to say, I will not submit to you, Jesus. I will not allow you to control my life.

I will not give you permission to remove from me my sin. I wish to hold on to my sin, at least these, because these are my pleasant sins. We have that right during this momentary time in history that we are still here.

Now for some of you who are young, it seems, I am ageless, I will live forever. It doesn't take any skill to get old. You don't need a college degree to get old.

All you have to do to get old is go to bed and get up. There is no award granted for growing old. Hopefully by the time a person is old, they will have gained some wisdom.

I've learned that that's not always true. I've seen very foolish old men, filled with utter darkness and complete perversion, who always resisted and hardened their hearts against the Holy Spirit's invitation to surrender their lives to Jesus. And so this week I've had to cry out on my knees to the Lord about hardness of heart.

Lord, what is this hardness of heart that seems to grow unbidden in my spirit? It usually works like this. The Holy Spirit will say, will you lay this down? Or the Holy Spirit says, will you take this up? I hope you caught that. Will you lay this down? Will you take this up? He never asks us to lay something down without also asking us to take something up.

But if we say no to the laying down, it's like me when my mom asked me to set the table. And so I went over and picked up the plates. There were five of us in the family.

And then I stacked on the plates five glasses. And then I stacked on the plates the silverware. And then I stacked on the plates the salt and pepper shaker.

And then I stacked on the plate, you've got it, right? And then I'm trying to carry all of this to the table. And I don't know how, but somehow the glasses toppled off. And many of them broke.

And my mother said I had taken a lazy man's load. And I said, Mama, what's a lazy man's load? And she said, you really don't want to do what I asked you to do. And so you try to do it quick and get it over with.

I know none of you do that. Hardness of heart comes as we have our own agenda and our own ideas. And we'll try to say yes to the Lord, but we may not in our hearts be saying yes.

And so we try to do what we're supposed to do, but we try to do it very quickly so we can get back to our life. Because it's really about my life. You can inconvenience me, but you can't pull me off track.

You're on your way to work, a car stops in front of you. What do you do? Do you run over him? Hopefully not. Hopefully you just step on the brake and you wait until he moves.

When he moves, do you then follow him home or to his office? No, you go to your office. You're on your way to your destination. That's what hardness of heart is.

When my destination is my destination. And I, as your pastor, constantly am trying to step in your way. And you'll kindly put on your brakes, listen to the sermon, smile sweetly, and step on the accelerator as you head to your destination.

And I'm saying we have that opportunity during this very brief period of time that we're here on this earth. But at some point, we will arrive at our destination. And if we have hardened our hearts against the Lord Jesus Christ, the destination we will arrive at will be our destination, which will be hell.

I don't want to arrive at that destination. I don't want us to arrive at that destination. So the Lord says, will you lay this down? Will you pick this up? And we say, yes, I'll lay this down until you're out of the way.

And then I'll pick it up again. Oh, you want me to pick that up too? Okay, I'll try to pick that up. And now I've got my hand picking this up.

I've got my hand on what I want. And pretty soon, I'm stacking everything and I'm carrying a lazy man's load. And soon the crash and bang come.

And you know what I hear people say to me? It's been said to me twice this week. You know what, Pastor? I just don't want to live anymore. I just want to die.

I'll either have my way or I'll die. It'll either go my way or I'm going to die. That's the very core of this rebellious spirit that wants to rise up and say, get out of my way, God, and let me go where I want to go.

And let me do what I want to do. And if I can't, and if you stand in my way too long, just let me die. My life is miserable.

I don't get what I want. Now, I have to confess, I've said this in my heart. If you tell me you've never said that, I'll tell you probably you're lying.

We're not very pretty when somebody stands in our way too long and blocks our path. Balaam was very angry that his donkey kept falling down under him. He beat his donkey.

How could this donkey dare lay down and stop him from getting his money? Until he saw the angel of the Lord with a drawn sword. And then he was, oh my, did I do something wrong? Are you upset with me? I wouldn't have come if I'd known you were upset with me. Come on, get real.

He knew the Lord didn't want him to go there. He was going there for the money. He was going in the hope of a reward.

So the Lord said, okay, go ahead and go, but you can only speak what I give you. So he'd do his whole dance and his whole number and he'd stand up and he'd try to speak a curse and a blessing would flow. You know what finally happened to Balaam? God finally got out of Balaam's way.

And he went over to the Moabites and told them how to seduce Israel. So they came with their dancing women and with the worship of their false gods and led a whole group of Israelites into worshiping a false god. And Moses then had to speak judgment on them and have them all executed.

In the meantime, Balaam was enjoying his money. He got the payoff. And then the Lord directed Moses, now go wipe out the Moabites.

And Balaam died, killed by the Israeli soldiers, died by the sword. Are you waiting for God to get out of your way so you can go ahead and do what you want to do? Or are you in a place today where you are willing to simply affirm with me, I will lay down by faith my life. I will pick up the life of the spirit.

I will pick up the life of the Lord Jesus Christ by the blood of Jesus. I will no longer seek to be somebody. I will no longer seek money or fame or ambition.

I will seek instead humility in Jesus Christ, offering my life as a burnt offering unto the Lord, a living martyr, a living sacrifice, totally given over to Jesus. A hardening of our heart comes as we've laid down, we've picked up, and then we begin to walk out our day. And something happens in our mind.

It says, God really didn't mean this. There's really no harm in this. Why don't you just go ahead? It's no big deal.

You deserve it anyway. You know you really didn't want to lay it down. Okay, this once, it won't matter.

You pick it back up, it tastes good, feels good, your heart feels comforted, and you suddenly recognize the presence of God has left you. And you recognize you're walking on your own path. And there's no guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Then you have to make a decision. Now what you do at this juncture is vital. If you turn in self-condemnation and say, I should have known better, you've already lost the war.

Not just the battle, you've lost the war. Because pride doesn't care whether it's lift up and fawned over or whether it's beat up. As long as pride gets to continue to live, it's happy.

Instead, the Lord is asking us, would you come back and just start over? Just come back and stand by the facts. The facts are Jesus Christ died to take away our sin. Jesus, would you take it away from me? I'm giving it to you now.

I don't feel your presence. I'm standing by the facts. The facts are you died on Calvary from me.

You're no longer on Calvary. You're resurrected. I stand by the facts that you died for me.

Now no matter what I feel like, I know I've sinned against you. I repent for that. I turn away from that.

And I'm asking you now, would you come? And would you rescue me? And would you remove this from my heart? And would you give me the gift of victory? And you stay in the prayer closet until you have a sense in your heart that faith has risen high enough that you can walk out of that prayer closet with no self-condemnation. You can walk out of that prayer closet and you can say, the blood of Jesus is enough for me. The blood of Jesus is enough for me.

See, I wish I could tell you today that the walk with Jesus is always on your feet. But it's not. It's also often on your face with mud all over it.

But that's the process of learning how to walk in Christ. That's the process of cutting off as the Holy Spirit exposes sin to us. Cutting it off and saying, okay, I see it.

I'm done. Now what if you've done that ten times? My mama used to say, try and try again. Well, what are you trying? What you're trying is to give your life over to Jesus Christ and no longer grab it back as yours.

And so you're in the prayer closet saying, Jesus, I will not grab this back again. I have no power not to. If you leave it to me, Jesus, I'll grab it back.

But by faith, I stand on what you did at the cross. I am ashamed of what I've done. I am sorry for what I've done.

I give it to you, Jesus. I can simply testify that after I've given my life into the hands of Jesus, and I know in my heart and in my mind that there is not anything in me that deserves the grace of Jesus. I know I am powerless against sin, but I give this into the hand of Jesus.

I testify to you that the grace of Jesus flows into my heart, and he gets the victory over that bondage of sin, and it is finished. It's over. Today, it doesn't matter what the sin is that you're fighting with.

It doesn't even matter if it's not sin, if it's simply the heart issue that God is asking you, will you give up your rights? Whatever it is, if you will give them up into the hand of Jesus, he will take them. He will meet you. It says here, if we deliberately keep on sinning after we've received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? What I'm trying to tell you today is that there is a temporary window of grace that is open to us. It will not always be available for you.

It is temporary. During this temporary period of time, we have an opportunity to, by faith, disregarding even our sense of feeling or reality, to look at Jesus Christ and say, will you take charge of my life? I surrender it to you. Or we have an opportunity to harden our hearts and stomp on the blood of Jesus and say, I trust my own reality.

I will not give myself to you. We have that temporary window open to us today, but it is temporary. So today is the day of salvation.

Tomorrow is the day of judgment. It's appointed unto every man to live once and then to die and to face the judgment. At the judgment, the question will be, have you allowed Jesus to remove the sin from your life? It will not be a question of whether you accepted Jesus Christ.

It will be a question of whether Jesus Christ will accept you. And he will only accept you, he will only accept you if you have said yes and allowed the blood of Jesus to remove all sin from your heart. Some of us feel like movie critics.

Go to the movie, listen to it and watch it, and then write our review on it. Give our thoughts on it. I hate to tell you today, but I must.

It's not the message that will be reviewed, it's your life that will be reviewed. It's not the message that is up for judgment, it's our lives that are up for judgment. It's what decision will we make about where we will spend eternity and with whom we will spend eternity.

That's why I say today, stand by your facts. It doesn't matter what you feel like. It doesn't matter what your sense of reality is.

It matters what the facts are. Lord Jesus, today we need to make that decision again to utterly lay down all that you've called us to lay down and to pick up all that you've called us to pick up. Lord, to lay down bitterness and despair and self-condemnation, to lay down judgments, anger, debauchery, lust.

Lord, to lay down those things that have kept us captive, independence, self-sufficiency. Lord, it's time to pick up humbleness of heart, submission to your authority. Lord, it's time to pick up the robe of Christ's righteousness and to go into the wedding banquet.

Thank you, Lord God. I pray in your name. Amen.

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