

LETTER TO THE BRF

Dear All,

There are certain times, circumstances and situations in the life of the church where there is need for very great wisdom. The wisdom I have in mind is as recorded by Solomon in Ecclesiastes 7:23-24: "I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me. That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?"

We who are from the BRF, together with many others, especially the CPRC in N. Ireland together with their sister churches in the PRC in the USA have been deeply concerned about the state of our churches here in England and Wales. As we assess our churches we see "That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered" (Ecc. 1:15). We are not alone; there are many who share this sad burden, who are not part of the BRF.

It seems to me we in the BRF have come to a juncture, where we are in need of this wisdom as never before. Wisdom which can make straight that which is crooked and supply that which is wanting in our churches. This wisdom is exceeding deep and far off, to date the wisdom needed to make straight that which is crooked and to supply that which is wanting in our churches has not come forward.

I suggest therefore it is a time for us all to seriously humble ourselves before God and confess with King Solomon, this wisdom is far from us.

To be practical, real and serious in seeking the wisdom that can make that which is crooked straight and supply the needs that are wanting, I am going to make a proposal if agreeable to the chairman, editor and general council of the BRF.

My proposal is that in the next issue of the *BRJ* a day of prayer and fasting be announced, so as many as share our sad burden may join together in the privacy of our homes and call out to God in an extraordinary manner for wisdom which will make straight that which is crooked and supply that

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which is wanting in our sad churches or, to use sixteenth-century language, a re-forming of our church in England and Wales.

There was an occasion when the disciples were faced with a humiliating and shameful failure, when they asked Jesus why they failed to deal with the incident they were told, “This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting” (Mark 9:29).

We from the BRF, together with many others who share the burden and desire of seeing the many evils cast out of our churches, are facing a spiritual difficulty of immense proportions, greater I would suggest than the disciples were faced with as recorded in Mark 9:14-29.

However, we need to remind ourselves there is a man seated on the throne of heaven who has said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18).

I will close this letter by quoting Psalm 74:1-3:

O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture? Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt. Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

Yours, sharing the concern of all,

Richard Holt

REPLY:

The BRF Council approves of Richard Holt’s proposal and recommends a day of prayer and fasting on Saturday, 25 August. Those for whom this day does not work could choose a date as close to this as possible. For more on fasting, see, for instance, *Westminster Confession* 21:5 and Calvin’s *Institutes* 4.12.14-21.

Rev. Angus Stewart
BRF Chairman