

CONFRONTATION, RECONCILIATION AND SEPARATION

The Foundational Faith

Ibn Adam Al-Amin

December 2011



CONFRONTATION, RECONCILIATION AND SEPARATION

Praise the Lord God of all people and peace to all the sons of Adam,
This booklet which has been placed in your generous hands includes the solid basis for explaining to us the teaching and information about confrontation, reconciliation and separation of believers that practice sin and do not confess the sin they commit. This is a discovery lesson from the Noble Book, i.e. the Gospel.

What is confrontation, reconciliation and separation in the Noble New Testament? Let us discover most of the points and the important ones in this study. What does the Almighty God say to us about confrontation, reconciliation and separation?

WISDOM FROM THE PROPHET DAVID

“How blessed is the one who does not follow the advice of the wicked, or walk in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of scoffers. Instead he finds pleasure in God’s law, he meditates on his commands day and night. He is like a tree planted by flowing streams, it yields its fruit at the proper time, and its leaves never fall off. He succeeds in everything he attempts. Not so with the wicked, but they are like wind-driven chaff. For this reason the wicked cannot flee from the punishment of the day of judgment, nor can sinners be in the assembly of the godly. Because God guards the godly in the way, but the wicked are on the way of destruction.” (Psalm 1:1-6) (scripture translation from Al-Kitaab Al-Sharif, an equivalent reading for the Word of God)

There is joy and great happiness in walking straight with God.

And we all know that godliness is required of us by God, to Him be power and majesty. But what do we do if we find one of the believers practicing sin and perpetrating misdeeds and transgressions and they call themselves a believer and they do not repent yet?

FORGIVENESS

First, what if someone sins? What do we do? The answer is that we must forgive them and pardon them and do not hold it against them, especially if they sinned against you. But if you answer them directly it is necessary that your purpose be completely clean of revenge so that the sinner may be straightened by your suitable manner and repent to live a godly and restored life.

God commanded that we forgive those who sin against us. But how many times must we forgive, one time only? What if the sinner repeats against us another time? And many times in the same day? My beloved brothers, we must forgive the one who sins against us every time, and not in certain circumstances, but that time and another time and other times. ***“Then Peter came to him and said, ‘Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother who sins against me? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, I tell you, but seventy-seven times!’”*** (Matthew 18:21-22) In His time, the known expression among the people was to forgive seven times only. But is “seventy-seven” times a big number? Christ’s point is to say to us that it is necessary to forgive those who sin against us up to a number without end.

And also in Luke, ***“Watch out for this. If your brother sins, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to you says: ‘I am sorry,’ then forgive him.”*** (Luke 17:3-4)

And Christ continues His words in Matthew. ***“For this reason, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. As he began settling his accounts, a man who owed ten thousand talents was brought to him. Because he was not able to repay it, the lord ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, children, and whatever he possessed, and repayment to be made. Then the slave threw himself to the ground before him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I will repay you everything.’ The lord had compassion on that slave and released him, and forgave him the debt. After he went out, that same slave found one of his fellow slaves who owed him one hundred silver coins. So he grabbed him by the throat and started to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ Then his fellow slave threw himself down and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will repay you.’ But he refused. Instead, he went out and threw him in prison until he repaid the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were very upset and went and told their lord everything that had taken place. Then his lord called the first slave and said to him, ‘Evil slave! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me! Should you not have shown mercy to your fellow slave, just as I showed it to you?’ And in anger his lord turned him over to the prison guards to torture him until he repaid all he owed. So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive your brother from the heart.”*** (Matthew 18:23-35)

And the Lord Christ said also, ***“For if you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you your sins.”*** (Matthew 6:14-15) (see also Mark 11:25 and Luke 6:37)

And, ***“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving***

one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also forgive others.” (Colossians 3:12-13)

Although there is complete forgiveness and pardon, it is right for us to confront the sinner not in order to separate them from the group of believers but so that they know their sin and repent in order to return and obtain a good relationship with God and people.

As we are ready to forgive, likewise we are also ready to confront the guilty sinner.

CONFRONTATION

The purpose of confrontation is reconciliation, a restored relationship between the person, God and others. For this reason Christ says, ***“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others with you, so that at the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to the church, treat him like a Gentile or a tax collector.”*** (Matthew 18:15-17) Agreement among brothers in confrontation of the sinner is associated with evidence of pleasing God. ***“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven. Again, I tell you the truth, if two of you on earth agree about whatever you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three are assembled in my name, I am there among them.”*** (Matthew 18:18-20)

And, as an example of this, Peter confronts a new believer. ***“Now Simon, when he saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, offered them money, saying, ‘Give me this power too, so that everyone I place my hands on may receive the Holy Spirit.’ But Peter said to him, ‘To Hell with you and your money! Because you thought you could buy God's gift with money! You have no share or part in this matter because your heart is not right before God! Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that he may perhaps forgive you for the intent of your heart. For I see that you are bitterly envious and in bondage to sin.”*** (Acts 8:18-23)

Paul confronts the believers in Corinth for not confronting those that were sinning. Paul asked them to confront any who ***“comes and proclaims another Jesus different from the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit than the one you received, or a different gospel than the one you accepted!”*** (2 Corinthians 11:4)

Paul Rebuked Peter. ***“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he had clearly done wrong.”*** (Galatians 2:11) Peter had sinned by keeping the written law in order to please people.

And, ***“Brothers and sisters, if a person is discovered in some sin, you who are spiritual restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. Pay close attention to yourselves, so that you are not tempted too. Carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Let each one***

examine his own work. Then he can take pride in himself and not compare himself with someone else. For each one will carry his own load. (Galatians 6:1-5)

If an elder sins, do you accept the complaint against him? When we talk about elders in the fellowship, Paul confirms the steps of confrontation which are recorded in Matthew 18. ***“Do not accept an accusation against an elder unless it can be confirmed by two or three witnesses. Those guilty of sin must be rebuked before all, as a warning to the rest.”*** (1 Timothy 5:19-20)

“And the Lord's slave must not engage in heated disputes but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance and then knowledge of the truth and they will come to their senses and escape the devil's trap where they are held captive to do his will.” (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

“Watch out, so that you do not lose the things we have worked for, but receive a full reward. Everyone who goes on ahead and does not remain in the teaching of Christ does not have God. The one who remains in this teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not give him any greeting, because the person who gives him a greeting shares in his evil deeds.” (2 John 1:8-11)

RECONCILIATION

If someone has something against you, then it is required that you go to them to reconcile. ***“So then, if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your gift.”*** (Matthew 5:23-24)

If someone repents, then forgive and welcome him back and show your love to him. For example, a sinner repented after Paul wrote 1 Corinthians chapter 5. So, So, Paul commanded in a second letter to the believers in Corinth that they receive him back because he repented. ***“This punishment on such an individual by the majority is enough for him, so that now instead you should rather forgive and comfort him. This will keep him from being overwhelmed by excessive grief to the point of despair. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.”*** (2 Corinthians 2:6-8)

Repentance is the heart of the matter because by repentance we return to relationship with God and people. And because God gave us freedom of choice we have the choose, repentance or remain in the sin. Some of the sinners do not repent and do not choose the path of truth, in other words, repentance. But what do we do if we find a believer committing a sin and they have been confronted and remain sinning?

SEPERATION (ISOLATION)

Separation in the New Testament is the step of action and isolation that a believer deserves who commits moral error and sin and even though they have been confronted they do not straighten from committing the wrong without regard or regret. The goal of separation is their return and repentance.

There are times when we as believers separate from another who claims to be a believer, but refuses to ***“cease from sinning and live for righteousness.”*** (1 Peter 2:24)

Can we expect someone to live a godly life? Is that possible? Yes, assuredly! Because it is not us ourselves who live, but Christ who lives in us. Someone may say that ***“I am unable to repent because sin is my nature!”*** By this it is like saying, ***“I don’t believe in Christ!”*** or, ***“I don’t believe that Christ is powerful enough to overcome my flesh.”***

Welcome Christ to be your healing. ***“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we may cease from sinning and live for righteousness. By his wounds you were healed.”*** (1 Peter 2:24)

Is it difficult to keep these commands? Yes. It is even impossible! But Christ is able. Invite Him to keep it for you and carry your wanderings. Christ was tempted, but He did not sin. You are free to live a life relying on Him each moment. His commands are easy, take up His yoke not the yoke of the world. ***“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and my load is not hard to carry.”*** (Matthew 11:28-30)

If you find that confronting a subject is easy for you, then rely on God while you listen to Him and obey Him, and He will inspire you when to say something and when to not say something. Listen to Him and be connected well to the Vine. Christ says, ***“I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me. He prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit. You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me, and I in him, bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch, and dries up; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and are burned up. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you. My Father is honored by this, that you bear much fruit and show that you are my disciples. Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you; remain in my love. If you obey my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be complete.”*** (John 15:1-11)

Is confronting the sinner difficult for you? Then put the matter in Christ’s hand for Him to carry it for you. Trust in Him and obey Him.

We understand that the godly life is possible. On this basis, what are the cases which we see as examples to separate from believers that remain in sin? Continued unrepentant sin is the basis of separation. If we confronted a sinning believer and they did not announce repentance and reliance on Christ to live a godly life, then separation is required of us from that believer. The following are examples that are appropriate for us, and we do not forget that the goal is repentance and return to a good relationship between the believer and God.

Rely on Christ and Not on the Law

Reliance on legal merits instead of Christ is sin. It is required to avoid those who say that they are believers, but they continue in sin. It is required that we avoid them so that the infection, i.e., their teaching, does not spread. ***“When the disciples went to the other side, they forgot to take bread. ‘Watch out,’ Jesus said to them, ‘beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ So they began to discuss this among themselves, saying, ‘It is because we brought no bread.’ When Jesus learned of this, he said, ‘You who have such little faith! Why are you arguing among yourselves about having no bread? Do you still not understand? Don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you took up? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many baskets you took up? How could you not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? But beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!’ Then they understood that he had not told them to be on guard against the yeast in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”*** (Matthew 16:5-12)

Follow Christ Only

Not following Christ is a sin. It is required to avoid those that say they are believers, but they continue in sin. It is required to avoid them in order that the infection does not spread in the group of believers in Christ. ***“Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who create dissensions and obstacles contrary to the teaching that you learned. Avoid them. For these are the kind who do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By their smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of the naive. Your obedience is known to all and thus I rejoice over you. But I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.”*** (Romans 16:17-19)

Flee from Sexual Immorality

Sexual immorality is a sin. It is necessary to avoid those who say they are believers, but continue in sin. It is necessary for us to avoid them in order that the infection not spread in the body of believers in Christ. ***“It is actually reported that sexual immorality exists among you, the kind of immorality that is not permitted even among the Gentiles, so that someone is cohabiting with his father’s wife. And you are proud! Shouldn’t you have been deeply sorrowful instead and removed the one who did this from among you? For even though I am absent physically, I am present in spirit. And I have already judged the one who did this, just as though I were present. When you gather together in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit, along with the power of our Lord Jesus, turn this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Don’t***

you know that a little yeast affects the whole batch of dough? Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough — you are, in fact, without yeast. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. So then, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of vice and evil, but with the bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. In no way did I mean the immoral people of this world, or the greedy and swindlers and idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who calls himself a Christian who is sexually immoral, or greedy, or an idolater, or verbally abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Do not even eat with such a person. For what do I have to do with judging those outside? Are you not to judge those inside? But God will judge those outside. Remove the evil person from among you.” (1 Corinthians 5:1-13)

And, *“Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals.’”* (1 Corinthians 15:33)

Also Paul warned the believers about sin, and sin is a source of wrong thinking that we are pleasing to God by obeying the religious law and not by faith in Christ. Paul said, *“A little yeast makes the whole batch of dough rise!”* (Galatians 5:9)

Be one who keeps good teaching and encourage all to keep it. *“But we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from any brother who lives an undisciplined life and not according to the tradition they received from us. For you know yourselves how you must imitate us, because we did not behave without discipline among you, and we did not eat anyone’s food without paying. Instead, in toil and drudgery we worked night and day in order not to burden any of you. It was not because we do not have that right, but to give ourselves as an example for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we used to give you this command: ‘If anyone is not willing to work, neither should he eat.’ For we hear that some among you are living an undisciplined life, not doing their own work but meddling in the work of others. Now such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and so provide their own food to eat. But you, brothers and sisters, do not grow weary in doing what is right. But if anyone does not obey our message through this letter, take note of him and do not associate closely with him, so that he may be ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”* (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15)

Agree with the Message from Christ

“If someone spreads false teachings and does not agree with sound words, that is, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the teaching that accords with godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing, but has an unhealthy interest in controversies and verbal disputes. This gives rise to envy, dissension, slanders, evil suspicions, and constant bickering by people corrupted in their minds and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a way of making a profit.” (1 Timothy 6:3-5) And some manuscripts include a command regarding these sinful people, *“Withdraw from such.”*

Flee from Wicked Talk

Paul set down an example of separation. ***“Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker who does not need to be ashamed, teaching the message of truth accurately. But avoid profane chatter, because those occupied with it will stray further and further into ungodliness, and their message will spread its infection like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus are in this group. They have strayed from the truth by saying that the resurrection has already occurred, and they are undermining some people's faith.”*** (2 Timothy 2:15-18)

And, also, avoid religious teachers who do not preach the power of Christ for salvation and godliness. ***“But understand this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, opposed to what is good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, loving pleasure rather than loving God. They will maintain the outward appearance of religion but will have repudiated its power. So avoid people like these.”*** (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

About elders, Paul writes, ***“He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught, so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching and correct those who speak against it.”*** (Titus 1:9)

And, after talking about some good and Godly commands, Paul was inspired again to encourage Titus to separate from those who do not hold to the truth. ***“This saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on such truths, so that those who have placed their faith in God may be intent on engaging in good works. These things are good and beneficial for all people. But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, quarrels, and fights about the law, because they are useless and empty. Reject a divisive person after one or two warnings. You know that such a person is twisted by sin and is conscious of it himself.”*** (Titus 3:8-11)

As an example, Christ says to the believers in the city of Ephesus, ***“I know your works as well as your labor and steadfast endurance, and that you cannot tolerate evil. You have even put to the test those who refer to themselves as apostles, but are not, and have discovered that they are false.”*** (Revelation 2:2)

And finally, the command of Christ is not to befriend or associate with anyone who does not repent, and they call themselves believers, because it is like gangrene which if it is not taken out then it causes danger for all the body.

Matthew and Mark both record that if a member of our body sins, then it is best for us to remove it and throw it out so that our whole body is not destroyed. And if the eye watches lustful things then it is better to take it out and throw it in the fire. And this is a clear picture of all who sin and do not repent.

And in the gospel of Mark precisely the context of the matter is about the believers together, i.e. how do we live together as believers. If a believer corrupts the others, then their removal is necessary from the company and group of believers. ***“John said to him, ‘Teacher, we saw***

someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us.’ But Jesus said, ‘Do not stop him, because no one who does a miracle in my name will be able soon afterward to say anything bad about me. For whoever is not against us is for us. For I tell you the truth, whoever gives you a cup of water because you bear Christ’s name will never lose his reward. ‘If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a huge millstone tied around his neck and to be thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life crippled than to have two hands and go into hell, to the unquenchable fire. If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better to enter life lame than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. If your eye causes you to sin, tear it out! It is better to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where the worm never dies and the fire is never quenched. Everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, it cannot return salty again! Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”
(Mark 9:38-50)

It is assumed that separation is to be a temporary separation until they would confess their sin and return to God and repent.

WARNINGS TO THOSE WHO CONFRONT

SEPERATION FOR A PERSONAL REASON – Separation of the people is not determined on the basis of persons. No man is greater than another. *“I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to agree together, to end your divisions, and to be united by the same mind and purpose. For members of Chloe’s household have made it clear to me, my brothers and sisters, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that each of you is saying, ‘I am with Paul,’ or ‘I am with Apollos,’ or ‘I am with Cephas,’ or ‘I am with Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Paul wasn’t crucified for you, was he? Or were you in fact baptized in the name of Paul?”* (1 Corinthians 1:10-13)

WE ONLY CONFRONT SIN - We do not judge someone on the basis of personality or tactics or strategy. But we judge sin and moral faults and ask the sinner to repent from their sins which find them guilty.

We do not judge anyone or condemn anyone on the basis of opinion or view and it is not our right to despise them because everyone will be judged by God not people.

When the acts of a believer are not sin, we do not have an opinion, and we must not judge them for they are not our employees. *“Now receive the one who is weak in the faith, and do not have disputes over differing opinions. One person believes in eating everything, but the weak person eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not despise the one who does not, and the one who abstains must not judge the one who eats everything, for God has accepted him. Who are you to pass judgment on another’s servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day holier than other days, and another regards them all alike. Each must be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day does it for the Lord. The one who eats, eats for the Lord*

because he gives thanks to God, and the one who abstains from eating abstains for the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. For none of us lives for himself and none dies for himself. If we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this reason Christ died and returned to life, so that he may be the Lord of both the dead and the living. But you who eat vegetables only — why do you judge your brother or sister? And you who eat everything — why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God.' Therefore, each of us will give an account of himself to God." (Romans 14:1-12)

And it is mentioned in the letter to the believers in the city of Corinth, *"For just as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body though many are one body, so too is Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Whether Jews or Greeks or slaves or free, we were all made to drink of the one Spirit. For in fact the body is not a single member, but many. If the foot says, 'Since I am not a hand, I am not part of the body,' it does not lose its membership in the body because of that. And if the ear says, 'Since I am not an eye, I am not part of the body,' it does not lose its membership in the body because of that. If the whole body were an eye, what part would do the hearing? If the whole were an ear, what part would exercise the sense of smell? But as a matter of fact, God has placed each of the members in the body just as he decided. If they were all the same member, where would the body be? So now there are many members, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' nor in turn can the head say to the foot, 'I do not need you.' On the contrary, those members that seem to be weaker are essential, and those members we consider less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our unrepresentable members are clothed with dignity, but our presentable members do not need this. Instead, God has blended together the body, giving greater honor to the lesser member, so that there may be no division in the body, but the members may have mutual concern for one another. If one member suffers, everyone suffers with it. If a member is honored, all rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and each of you is a member of it. And God has placed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, gifts of healing, helps, gifts of leadership, different kinds of tongues. Not all are apostles, are they? Not all are prophets, are they? Not all are teachers, are they? Not all perform miracles, do they? Not all have gifts of healing, do they? Not all speak in tongues, do they? Not all interpret, do they?"* (1 Corinthians 12:12-30)

And James wrote by inspiration from God, *"Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. He who speaks against a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but its judge. But there is only one who is lawgiver and judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. On the other hand, who are you to judge your neighbor?"* (James 4:11-12)

In the book of Revelation Jesus rebuked some of the believers in the churches, confronting only sins of action, falsehood and lies.

"But I have this against you: You have departed from your first love. Therefore, remember from what high state you have fallen and repent! Do the deeds you did at the first; if not, I will

come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, that is, if you do not repent.”
(Revelation 2:4-5)

And, also, ***“But I have a few things against you: You have some people there who follow the teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and commit sexual immorality. In the same way, there are also some among you who follow the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore, repent and if not, I will come against you quickly and make war against those people with the sword of my mouth.”*** (Revelation 2:14-16)

And, also, ***“But I have this against you that you tolerate that woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess, and by her teaching deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I have given her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her sexual immorality. I am throwing her onto a bed of violent illness, and those who commit adultery with her into terrible suffering, unless they repent of her deeds. Furthermore, I will strike her followers with a deadly disease, and then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts. I will repay each one of you what your deeds deserve.”***
(Revelation 2:20-23)

And, also, ***“Wake up and strengthen what remains before it dies, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Therefore, remember what you received and heard, and obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will never know at what hour I will come against you.”*** (Revelation 3:2-3)

And, also, ***“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth. You say, ‘I am rich and have acquired great wealth, and need nothing,’ but do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked, take my advice and buy gold from me refined by fire so you can become rich. Buy from me white clothing so you can be clothed and your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and buy eye salve to put on your eyes so you can see. All those I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.”***
(Revelation 3:15-19)

CONCLUSION

1. We confront the sinning believer directly, privately and the goal of the confrontation is restoration of the relationship between God and the people and is not completed except by repentance.
2. If the sinning believer does not repent it is our duty to confront them with two or three other believers in order to turn from their action and repent and this is the goal.
3. If they do not repent then confront them in front of the group of believers and the goal is their repentance.
4. If they do not repent then we treat them among the believers as we treat unbelievers and it is required that we love them.

And, we do not forget that we are not against a certain strategy or against a certain protocol or against a certain tradition, but we confront sin only.

And, lastly, I remind you of Christ and His love (Ephesians 5:1-14), ***“Therefore, be imitators of God as dearly loved children and live in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God. But among you there must not be either sexual immorality, impurity of any kind, or greed, as these are not fitting for the saints. Neither should there be vulgar speech, foolish talk, or coarse jesting, all of which are out of character, but rather thanksgiving. For you can be confident of this one thing: that no person who is immoral, impure, or greedy, such a person is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let nobody deceive you with empty words, for because of these things God's wrath comes on the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them, for you were at one time darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light, for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For the things they do in secret are shameful even to mention. But all things being exposed by the light are made evident. For everything made evident is light, and for this reason it says:***

***‘Awake, O sleeper,
Rise from the dead,
then Christ will shine on you!’”***

Amen