The angel was some one *possessed of the chief authority*  
in the Church; and by the Lord Jesus, therefore, was held  
*responsible for the doctrines professed and taught*. He  
did not hold these evil views himself: but *he did not  
attempt to put them down*. Evil had entered into the  
Church more fully than at Ephesus. The angel there  
was praised, as unable to endure the wicked, and hating  
the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Here they were *permitted  
to teach*, and to *practise* their abominations.  
 He is, therefore, required to repent. *He must use  
discipline against the offenders*. Discipline, lovingly  
and firmly applied, would either recover the unsound to  
the true faith and practice, or exclude them. Left to  
itself, *false doctrine is leaven*, which is apt to spread,  
till the whole is leavened.  
 Be it observed, that the purity which the Lord Jesus  
sought, and the want of which He reproved, was not the  
purity of written articles of faith, which might remain  
unchanged, despite the complete falling away of the  
living members from the truth; *but a purity of the  
persons united in fellowship*.  
 “But to what extent is it lawful to seek to put any  
out from communion *because of difference of doctrine?  
Is no difference of opinion to be tolerated?*”  
 Yes! Differences of view on very many and important points are to be met with forbearance and Christian  
love. Rom. xiv., xv.  
 There are but *two exceptions*: (1) one of *doctrine;*  
(2) one of *practice*.  
 (1) *That of doctrine* is found where the *parties are*  
“*Antichrists*,” denying *the Trinity*, or the *two natures  
of Christ*. 2 John 6; 1 John iv.1

1 [Mr. Govett modified this view in later years. In his*Exclusion for Doctrine Unscriptural*, p. 23 (1885), he says: “Even  
the Antichrists were not, by the authority of God, put out of  
communion after once being received at the Lord’s Table. They  
went out of themselves: 1 John ii. 18, 19.”]