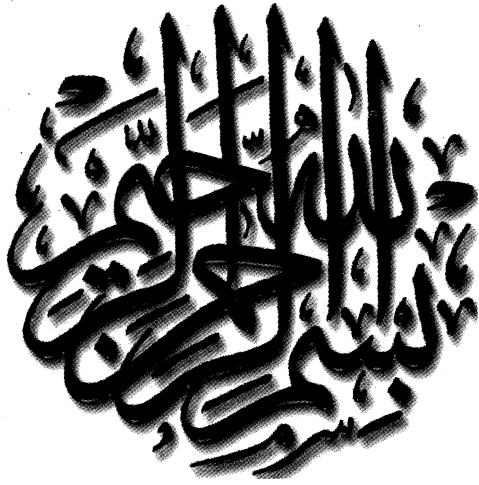




Factors for Rectifying
Society

Imām ‘Abdul-‘Azīz bin Bāz





Factors for Rectifying Society

We accept any practical feedback, which might lead to improvement of the book ; perfection is important and is solely for Allah alone.

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Factors for Rectifying Society

Imām

'Abdul'Azeez bin 'Abdullāh bin Bāz

Introduction

All praise is due to Allāh Lord of the Worlds and may complete peace and blessings be upon Allāh's slave and messenger, our Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah, and upon his family and companions, and whoever followed him in his way and was guided with his guidance until the Day of Judgment.

And so, I praise Allāh, the Exalted, for this meeting He has blessed me with, among my brothers and sons in this university. I ask Allāh to bless this meeting and to make all our hearts and actions righteous, and to guide us. We seek refuge in Him from the evil in ourselves and from our wrong deeds and actions.

I would like to thank the people in charge of this university¹ for inviting me here. I ask Allāh to help and guide them to what pleases Allāh, to what is good for the students of the university, its staff, people in charge, and to what is good for all Muslims in general and will increase their guidance. We seek refuge in Allāh from all what causes His Anger and is against His Divine Legislation, He is the Most Generous. O brothers and sons, I want my speech to be brief and concise. The title of my speech is: *Factors for Rectifying Society*.

¹ The University of Petroleum and Minerals in Dhahran, KSA. This lecture was given nearly 30 years ago.

Society is in dire need of reform, both the Islamic and non-Islamic societies, however, specifically the Islamic society. It needs to follow the straight path, and to implement the factors, elements and means which lead to improvement. It needs to follow the way of the best creation, our prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullāh (*peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him*).² We know that the elements which can improve Islamic and non-Islamic society are the ones which the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) carried out, and the ones which were carried out by the companions, led by Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, Umar al-Farūq, Uthmān ThuNūrayn and Ali al-Murtadha Abu'l-Hasan. And all the other companions may Allāh be pleased with them and make us their followers.

We also know that these elements were carried out by the prophet (*peace be upon him*) in Makkah first and then in al-Madeenah. Nothing will improve the Ummah's modern society apart from what improved the first society of this Ummah, as a number of scholars have stated, such as, Imam Malik ibn Anas, who was the Imam of al-Madeenah in his time and is one of the four imams.

² Allāh says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ

وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allāh an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allāh and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allāh often.”

{*al-Ahzāb (33): 21*}

He is the one who mentioned this statement, which has been approved by scholars in his time and after him:

The latter of the Ummah will only be rectified by that which rectified the former of the Ummah.³

The meaning of this statement is that, what improved and bettered the first society of this Ummah, which is following the Qur'ān and Sunnah (tradition) of the prophet (*peace be upon him*), is what will improve the last society of this Ummah, until the Day of Judgment. Whoever wants Islamic society to improve or any other society in this world, based on ways, means or elements different to those of the first people of the Ummah then they are wrong and false as there is no other way to achieve this.

The way to improve people and make them follow the straight path is via the way of the prophet (*peace be upon him*), his companions and their followers in perfection until this day. This way gives interest and concern in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Prophet

³ Al-Jawharī relates in *Musnad Muwatta'*, p.783 with his chain of transmission that Mālik said: "Wahb bin Kaysān was sitting with us and if he ever got up to leave he would say "the latter part of the Ummah will not be rectified except by that which rectified the first part of the Ummah"" I asked Mālik what he meant by this, Mālik replied "piety". Refer to al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā' ul-Asmā'*, vol.14, p.6209 and Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol.27, p.348.

Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) calling and inviting people to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, being well-versed in both of them, spreading them among people, with knowledge and insight, and explaining the matters of the Qur'ān and Sunnah of true Islamic creed.

Some matters which need to be implemented in the Islamic society are: identifying the matters that Allāh has forbidden, which the Islamic society must stay away from and identifying the punishments that Allāh and His prophet have appointed so people avoid the acts that they will be punished for, as Allāh said:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٢٩﴾

“These are the limits of Allāh, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits of Allāh – it is those who are the wrongdoers.”

{*al-Baqarah* (2): 229}

These limits are the things He forbade us to approach by committing sins, as He forbade us to transcend the limits which He set for His slaves, meaning what He has obliged upon us and made compulsory such as acts of worship.

The first thing that the prophet (*peace be upon him*) did and the first basis he put down was calling people to Tawhid (the oneness) of Allāh, and sincere devotion in worship to Him. This was his first action, and first fundamental that he spoke with and continued to do,

inviting people to the Oneness of Allāh and guiding them to the details of this. The saying which indicates this is saying: “There is no god worthy of worship but Allāh”. This is the firm foundation, along with testifying that Muhammad is the messenger of Allāh. These two important principles and fundamentals are the foundation of Islām and the foundation for improving society, as:

- ❖ Whoever says and believes them and implements them in their actions, has knowledge of them and calls to them patiently, will be steadfast and Allāh will better the society through this person, according to the degree of his effort, and ability.
- ❖ Whoever leaves them out or one of them, will lose and perish.

When Allāh sent His prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) and revealed the Qur’ān to him, the first thing He revealed was: “Iqra’a” (read) and then “al-Muddathir” (the one enveloped). He then approached his people calling them to the Oneness of Allāh and warning them of His Indignation, saying: “*O people, say: there is no god worthy of worship but Allāh, and you will succeed.*”⁴ The polytheists were arrogant and denied this as it was not what they were accustomed to and it was not their

⁴ Narrated by an-Nasā’ī; Ibn Hibbān; Ibn Abī Shaybah and al-Bukhārī in *Khalaq Af’āl ul-’Ibād*, p.58; Ibn Khuzaymah and ad-Dāraqutnī from Tāriq al-Muhāribī. Authenticated by our Shaykh, al-Albānī, in *at-Ta’leeqāt ul-Hassān*, no.6528 in the chapter on the number of Sahābah.

ancestors' way. This is why they denied it and said at that time,

أَجْعَلَ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجَابٌ

“Has he made the gods [only] one God? Indeed, this is a curious thing.”

{*Sād* (38): 5}

They also said:

وَيَقُولُونَ أَنبَأْنَا لِتَارِكُوا آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجْنُونٍ

“And were saying, “Are we to leave our gods for a mad poet?””

{*as-Saffāt* (37): 36}

And before that Allāh said:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنبَأْنَا لِتَارِكُوا
آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجْنُونٍ

“Indeed they, when it was said to them, “There is no deity but Allāh,” were arrogant...”

{*as-Saffāt* (37): 35}

وَيَقُولُونَ أَنبَأْنَا لِتَارِكُوا آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجْنُونٍ

“And were saying, “Are we to leave our gods for a mad poet?””

{*as-Saffāt* (37): 36}

So Allāh said in reply to them:

بَلْ جَاءَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَدَّقَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

**“Rather, the Prophet has come with the truth
and confirmed the [previous] messengers.”**

{as-Saffāt (37): 37}

Because of the leniency of many scholars, and knowledge-seekers, who have understood the Oneness of Allāh but are lenient when it comes to this significant fundamental, shirk (ascribing partners with Allāh) has spread across many countries. Graves and people in graves are worshipped other than Allāh and many forms of worship are directed to them. Some people invoke the dead in their graves, while others seek help from them, others make *nathr* (a vow) to the dead person in a grave, while others are asking for aid! Just like Quraysh and others did in the pre-Islamic era with al-'Uzza! And some others did with al-Lat and Manat and other idols. And as practiced by polytheists in all times with their idols. Glorifying them and invoking them, seeking help and mercy from them.

These are the shaytan's plots and traps, as his main concern is leading people astray from their belief, creed and religion and excluding them from it - by all means. Therefore, it is compulsory upon knowledge-seekers, who are the hope of this Ummah after Allāh of future leadership, whatever university they have graduated from, to lead with wisdom, sincere devotion, honesty, and have concern with the foundation and know that the

only great element which to lean upon and is followed by everything else, is: concern with tawhid, the oneness of Allāh, being sincerely devoted to Him, being concerned with believing in Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) and that he is the true messenger, and that it is compulsory to follow him and his way, and that his companions are the best of this Ummah.⁵ We must think well of all their actions and sayings and believe in their justice and that they are the best of this Ummah after Muhammad (*peace be upon him*). We must believe that they are the conveyors of the Sunnah and the Qur'ān.

Therefore, it is compulsory to follow their way and to say “may Allāh be pleased with them” after mentioning all their names. It is also a must to believe that they are the best people after the prophets, as confirmed in al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Ibn Mas'ūd (*may Allāh be pleased with him*) reported that he heard the prophet (*peace be upon him*) say: “*The best people are my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them.*” There are other hadiths which convey this meaning.⁶ Thus, the companions are the best people after the prophets. They are ordered into ranks of virtue:

- ❖ The best of them are the guided caliphs.

⁵ Not like how the Shi'a believe!

⁶ Many books past and present have been authored in regards to the virtue of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

- ❖ Then the ten who were given the glad tidings of entering paradise.
- ❖ Then the rest of them-in their ranks- according to their knowledge and virtues.

Thus, it is compulsory to be concerned with this principle, and to call people to the oneness of Allāh and devoting worship sincerely to Allāh,⁷ and to not glorify graves, prophets, pious walis of Allāh, and to not worship them besides Allāh or to direct any act of worship to them, such as invocation, fear or hope etc.

Knowledge-seekers and leaders are obliged to glorify Allāh's commands and what He forbids, and to establish fearing Allāh in their hearts, before everything else, to glorify what Allāh commands us to do and what He forbids us to do. He must not be concerned with what the enemies of Islām spread against the truth and the people of the truth, by trusting Allāh, and in belief with what the prophet (*peace be upon him*) and all prophets (*peace be upon them*) promised us to happen, as Allāh said:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُوذُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا

فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

⁷ Worship [ʾIbādah] is a comprehensive term for all statements and actions, internal and external, which Allāh loves and is pleased with. Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah's treatise on *'Ubūdiyyah* [Servitude] explains this in depth, refer to my edit of the work. Also see *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol.10, p.149.

**“And those who disbelieved said to their messengers,
“We will surely drive you out of our land, or you must
return to our religion.””**

{Ibraheem (14): 13}

So their Lord revealed to them:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُوذُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا
فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَنُسَكِّنَنَّكُمْ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ
ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ

**“So their Lord inspired to them, “We will surely
destroy the wrongdoers. And We will surely cause you
to dwell in the land after them. That is for he who
fears My position and fears My threat.””**

{Ibraheem (14): 13-14}

So knowledge-seekers, scholars and insightful leaders should neither be concerned with what grave-worshippers and the superstitious spread against the truth nor with what the enemies of Islām spread against them from all types of opposition. They must stand firm in their field and have patience, attach their hearts to Allāh and fear Him, and hope for victory from Him, the *Exalted and Glorious*, as He is the *Supporter and the Protector*. He has promised to help those who help in His Cause, as He said:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

**“If you help Allāh, Allāh will help you,
and plant firmly your feet”**

{Muhammad (47): 7}

And He said:

وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

**“...and incumbent upon Us was support
of the believers.”**

{ar-Rūm (30): 47}

However, there is a condition, which is holding onto Allāh’s religion, and belief in it and in His prophet (*peace be upon him*) and being steadfast in this religion. This is the cause for Allāh’s help, and it is the condition for gaining Allāh’s help, as Allāh said:

وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤١﴾
الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَكَتْلَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

**“And Allāh will surely support those who support
Him. Indeed, Allāh is Powerful and Exalted in Might.
[And they are] those who, if We give them authority
in the land, establish prayer and give zakāh and
enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And
to Allāh belongs the outcome of [all] matters.”**

{al-Hajj (22): 40-41}

In another verse Allāh said:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
 كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ
 وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا

“Allāh has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession (to authority) upon the earth just as he granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them (therein) their religion which He has preferred for them and that he will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security (for) they worship Me, not associating anything with Me.”

{*an-Nūr* (24): 55}

This is His promise to those who are steadfast in faith, guidance and righteous good deeds: He will grant them succession to the rulers of their land and He will grant them the power to practice His religion, and will keep it safe and secure from the evil of its enemies and their plots,⁸ and He will make them victorious.

In order to achieve the testimony (that Muhammad is the messenger of Allāh), one must glorify the Sunnah and

⁸ It can possibly be said that most of those today who show enmity to the people of truth and the du'āt are partisan political elements and unfortunately some of those whom ascribe to Islamic political parties after they have acquired newspapers, media outlets, satellite channels and positions.

call to it. We must implement its purposes and warn others to not differ from the Sunnah. We must explain the Qur’ān aided by the Sunnah, in the matters which may have hidden meanings, as the Qur’ān is explained by the Sunnah⁹ and it helps in understanding the Qur’ān, it refers to the meanings of the Qur’ān and expresses them, as Allāh said:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought.”

{an-Nahl (16): 44}

This great principle must be the starting point for sincere people calling to Islām who want to take the charge of bettering society and take it to safety, security and survival. So this betterment and improvement is based on the most important element, sincere devotion of worship to Allāh and believing in His prophet (*peace be upon him*), glorifying His commands and what He forbids, following His Divine Legislation and warning people from going against it.

⁹ Ad-Dārimī relays in his *Sunan* (607) from Yahyā bin Abī Katheer who said: “The Sunnah judges the Qur’ān and the Qur’ān does not judge the Sunnah.” Ibn ‘AbdulBarr in *Jāmi’ Bayān al-‘Ilm wa Fadlihi* (2354) relays from Imām Ahmad that he said commenting on that: “...however, I say that the Sunnah explains the Qur’ān and clarifies it.”

Next, they must consider the other elements which come after this principle: they must call to performing the obligations of Allāh, such as, prayer, giving alms, fasting, pilgrimage etc. They must tell people to avoid what Allāh has forbidden, such as *shirk* (ascribing partners with Allāh), and all other sins and evil less than *shirk*. They must strive to better people and enjoin good and forbid wrong, call people to Allāh, and bring back together people who are in dispute etc. They must strive with all their effort to establish Allāh's command on His land, and to avoid what Allāh forbids, and to warn others to stay away from forbidden innovations in religion.

This is what the guided person calling to Allāh is like, taking on the factors of improvement one by one bearing in mind the firm foundation, which is achieving the testimony that there is no god worthy of worship other than Allāh and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allāh, to have knowledge of this and to act by it. He must teach this to people and act upon it himself. So, he unifies Allāh in worship and submits to His Divine Legislation by following Prophet Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) and his Sunnah. He must glorify the Sunnah as the companions did and follow the way and content of it with the Qur'ān, as the companions did, because of the companion's great knowledge and understanding of the Qur'ān and Sunnah, as they had no other books, all books came after them. As for the companions and their

followers (who came after them), this is what they did in their lives:

- Based on the Qur'ān, they pondered on the meanings of the Qur'ān and read it with good righteous intentions with the intention of learning and benefitting from it and acting upon it.
- The same applies to the Sunnah - they studied it, memorized it, learnt it and acted upon it.

This is what the companions did (*may Allāh be pleased with them*) and this is what their followers in perfection did, before the existence of books on hadith and on other topics. So imagine yourself with them, take knowledge from the book of Allāh and His prophet's Sunnah (*peace be upon him*), and the knowledge of scholars. Take what will help you to further understand the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

Be eager to learn and be well-versed in your religion, so you can direct the society to the straight path, and lead them to safety and security. For you to know how to act, start with yourself, and strive to improve yourself and compete in acts of goodness. Be among the first people in prayer and in all goodness; be among the ones farthest from evil; act in compliance with the book of Allāh and the prophet's Sunnah in all your actions and utterances, with your peers, brothers, and people who help you. This is what a believer should be like.

This is what the companions were like (*may Allāh be pleased with them*) and this was the way of their followers and the ones who came after them and the Imams of guidance: they studied the Qur'ān and acted upon it; they passed their knowledge on to people and taught the Qur'ān to them; they guided them to the meanings of the Qur'ān and taught them the Sunnah; they encouraged them to hold onto them both and to understand them; they advised people to glorify the commands of Allāh and what He forbade and to not transgress the limits Allāh and His prophet have set, in their life on this world. Thus, every factor of improvement requires honesty and sincerity:

- As calling and inviting people to the oneness of Allāh requires sincerity, honesty and an explanation of the meaning of (“there is no god worthy of worship but Allāh”); there is nobody other than Allāh who has the right to be worshipped. It is compulsory to stay away from all types of shirk (ascribing partners to Allāh) major and minor, and to warn people from shirk, as the prophet (*peace be upon him*) did, along with his companions may Allāh be pleased with him.

By pondering on the Qur'ān this meaning is further understood.

- Also the Sunnah must be glorified and called to, after believing in Muhammad being the messenger of Allāh. It is compulsory upon us to follow him, and believe that Allāh sent him to all people in the world, Arabs and non-Arabs, jinn and human, male and female.

Thus, it is compulsory upon all people on earth to follow him, as Allāh said:

قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنِّي رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ اِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيْعًا اَلَّذِي لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِىْ وَيُمِيْتُ فَآمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ النَّبِيِّ الَّذِي اَمَّاىٓ
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَكَلِمٰتِهِ وَاَتَّبِعُوْهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ

“Say (O Muhammad peace be upon him):

O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allāh – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. La ilaha illa huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allāh and His Messenger (Muhammad peace be upon him), the Prophet who can neither write nor read (i.e. Muhammad peace be upon him), who believes in Allāh and His words [(this Qur’ān), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allāh’s word: Be! – and he was, i.e. Isa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary)] and follow him so that you may be guided.”

{*al-A’rāf* (7): 158}

Allāh, The Exalted, said before that:

فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel, who enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the evil and relieves them of their burden and the shackles which were upon them. So they who have believed in him, honored him, supported him and followed the light which was sent down with him – it is those who will be the successful.”

{*al-A'rāf* (7): 157}

- So those who follow him, glorify his commands and what he forbids, and they are the successful ones.
- Whoever opposes this and follows his or her desire and the shaytan, is the loser and has perished, there is neither might nor power except in Allāh.

The factors can be listed according to what you are calling to, or what you are forbidding. You strive to choose the factor which is suitable for what you are calling to, the Islamic factor which you know the source of, and its source from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. As you

are calling people to Allāh's religion, and to performing the obligations Allāh has set for us and to avoid what Allāh has forbidden upon us, in the way that the prophet (*peace be upon him*) did. Factors and societies differ:

- For example, a society which is against Islām, and is not led by someone that will help you in bettering and guiding the society. Here you must work as the prophet (*peace be upon him*) did in Makkah, by calling people to Allāh kindly, in a nice manner, with gentle words, so what you say penetrates their hearts and influences them. This way their hearts will be attracted to obeying Allāh and to the oneness of Allāh. You must cooperate with your brothers in Islām and all others who are calling to Allāh in your way. You must guide people gently in the societies which you have access to, until faith is established in their hearts and is spread among people with its clear evidence.
- And then there is the Islamic society, with the existence of a leader who will help you: here you will be more active in enjoining good and forbidding bad, connecting with responsible people, in the case of opposing people, and people who you fear will affect society with their obstinacy. You must be on the straight path, but with kindness, wisdom and patience, as Allāh said:

وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“By time, Indeed, mankind is in loss, Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”

{*al-Asr (103): 1-3*}

So one must be patient, and recommend the truth, and invite people to it, to be successful in their task and duty. Also, responsible people and elders, such as the Ummah’s leaders and rulers who are feared for their evil influences when calling to Allāh: they must be advised kindly and they must be guided and called to Allāh in written form and orally. As Allāh said:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

“So by mercy from Allāh, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you.”

{*Āli ’Imran (3): 159*}

And as Allāh said to Moses and Āron peace be upon them, when He sent them to fira’wan:

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَى

“And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept
admonition or fear (Allāh).”

{*TaHa* (20): 44}¹⁰

Therefore, it is obligatory upon people calling to Islam to follow this way and manner and to resolve the problems of society with wisdom and fair preaching to address each person in the way which is most appropriate to them, so that they will be successful in this task and reach the end that they hope for. The one who calls to Allāh and wishes to improve society must also consider and bear in mind two other factors other than the two previous factors:

- Advising and recommending the truth, to his brothers, peers and leaders of the society.
- Patience and forbearance with the harm and hardships he may receive from leaders etc in compliance with the what has been stated in the Qur’ān,

¹⁰ Ibn ul-Qayyim commenting on this noble ayah stated in *I’lām ul-Muwaqqi’een*, vol.3, p.111:

Allāh instructed to speak with mildness to his greatest enemy and the most intense in kufr in order not to be harsh against him, though he deserved it, so as to block the means to his turning away and impatience against the proofs being established on him. Allāh forbade them from that which was permitted in order for that which is more disliked to not occur.

وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“By time, Indeed, mankind is in loss, Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”

{*al-Asr (103): 1-3*¹¹}

And also, imitating the noble prophets (*peace be upon them*) as Allāh said to His prophet Muhammad peace be upon him in the end of Sūrat al-Ahqaf which was revealed in Makkah:

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ
كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرُونَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمَّا بَلَغُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ
بَلَغَ فَهْلٍ يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“So be patient, [O Muhammad], as were those of determination among the messengers and do not be impatient for them.”

{*al-Ahqaf (46): 35*}

- And Allāh said in Sūrat Āli 'Imrān which was revealed in Madeenah:

¹¹ Imām Muhammad bin Nasr al-Marwazī relayed in *Ta'dheem Qadr us-Salāh*, vol.2, p.681 that 'nasīhah' means:

...a word which contains all forms of good which are sought after and instructed towards and all forms of evil which are feared and forbidden.

Refer to my introduction to *Nasīhat ul-Malik al-Ashraf*, pp.8-10.

* لَتَبْلُوَنَّ فِيْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ
 مِنْ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيْرًا وَإِنْ
 تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

“You will surely be tested in your possessions and in yourselves. And you will surely hear from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allāh much abuse. But if you are patient and fear Allāh – indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination.”

{*Āli 'Imrān* (3): 186}

And Allāh said when forbidding us to seek consultancy from the disbelievers:

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

“And if you are patient and fear Allāh, their plot will not harm you at all. Indeed, Allāh is encompassing of what they do.”

{*Āli 'Imrān* (3): 120}

And Allāh said at the end of Sūrat an-Nahl which was revealed in Madeenah:

وَأَصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي ضَيْقٍ
 مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ

“And be patient, [O Muhammad], and your patience is not but through Allāh. And do not grieve over them and do not be in distress over what they conspire.”

{an-Nahl (16): 127}

There are countless verses in this context. Anyone who takes the path of the prophets in calling to Allāh will be successful and will gain a good sequel and victory over his enemies. Whoever follows this way and ponders over the history of those who called to Allāh in reforming society shall know that it is the truth.

Conclusion

I ask Allāh with His Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes to improve the Islamic world's conditions and grant them understanding of their religion and to help their leaders in all good deeds and to make their consultants righteous. And I seek refuge in Allāh for all Muslims, everywhere, from the trials that will lead them astray and from the obeying of desires and the shaytan. He is the Only One Who has the Power to do this.

*And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet
Muhammad peace be upon him and his family
and companions.¹²*

¹² I completed this edit and annotated commentary on Sunday 10th Rabī' uth-Thānī 1432 AH, all praise is due to Allāh. I finished reviewing it on 27 Ramadan 1434 AH.

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