

COMPARISON OF THE ROLES OF:

POINTS OF COMPARISON	FIRST PRINCIPLES (ROOTS / FAITH / BELIEF / "MILK")	to COMMANDMENTS (FRUITS / ACTIONS / WORKS / "MEAT")
WHAT IT IS:	KNOWLEDGE = UNDERSTANDING = COMPREHENSION WHO/WHAT YAHWEH IS > HIS GREATNESS > HIS PLAN > WHAT HE HAS DONE > HIS GIFT OF GRACE ("WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS")	AWARENESS = GRATITUDE = RESPONSE ("FRUITS") AWARENESS OF OUR POSITION ("God be merciful to me a sinner") = OUR RESPONSE to GOD'S Gift of GRACE (i.e., GRATITUDE) = FRUITS (merging God's commandments into our actions / characters)
WHAT IT REFLECTS:	YAHWEH'S INTELLECT as expressed in His creation — God's plan with His creation. "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." — Gal_3:8	YAHWEH'S MORAL CHARACTER — God's purpose with His creation. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD." — Num_14:21
MANIFESTED BY:	FAITH (reliance, dependance)	WORKS (action - develop correct habits to discern "good" & "evil" Heb_5:14)
MOTIVATED BY:	FAITH (Trust, Conviction, Confidence) "hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end"	GRACE (= gratitude "God's influence on our hearts & it's reflection in our lives")
WHAT IT DOES:	Knowledge of Yahweh's principles ENLIGHTENS ONE TO ONE'S TRUE POSITION as being "without hope and without God in the world" and activates, convicts and convinces the conscience of sin and makes one aware of the need for repentance and baptism	PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE TO YAHWEH for His mercy, longsuffering & forgiveness; and especially in view of the fact that "...God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners...God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh..." (- Rom_5:8; Rom_8:3)
IT'S EFFECTS:	The BASIS OF RESPONSIBILITY TO RESURRECTION & JUDGMENT . Coupled with baptism, it is the way to repentance and forgiveness, and places one into a "right relationship with Yahweh" - i.e., "righteousness". Without baptism, it is the basis of condemnation. No approach to God without knowledge and acceptance of these, therefore no forgiveness.	After baptism, the commandments (Divine precepts) provide the BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND SPIRITUAL MATURITY . Provides awareness of the kind of activity, behaviour and character that pleases God and gives glory and honour to his name.
ACTION REQUIRED:	TRUTHS TO BE ACCEPTED; In some cases, falsehoods should also be rejected (Doctrines to be rejected)	MORAL PRECEPTS TO BE APPLIED in daily life and obeyed - for the purpose of reflecting and manifesting God's character in our daily lives.
TIME REQUIRED:	A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME - whatever time is sufficient for the mind to grasp the great Divine Truths contained in scripture. The greatest obstacles are those that come from false human traditions inculcated in the mind.	A LIFETIME OF DEVELOPMENT (reading, learning, observance, application, etc) with necessary failures to develop humility, obedience, mercy, patience, righteous judgment and all the fruits of the spirit.
ROLE OF JUDGMENT:	VERY LITTLE - BEYOND THE JUDGMENT REQUIRED FOR ORDINARY COGNITION. First principles are fundamental doctrines that are absolute and essential to the Gospel or to upholding the Gospel. No room for variance, or individual latitude of conscience No excuse or provision here for the weakness of the flesh, or the frailty of human nature. We either understand & accept them, or we do not. Without them there is no approach for Divine forgiveness of sins.	Commandments REQUIRE NOT ONLY CORRECT UNDERSTANDING BUT ALSO CORRECT APPLICATION, AND JUDGING RIGHTEOUS JUDGEMENT , and to make our best effort to fully live them (though human nature prevents sinlessness in all except our Lord Jesus Christ). In the application of them, we must act according to our individual conscience governed by GRATITUDE "What you believe about these things should be kept between you and God. You are fortunate, if your actions don't make you have doubts. But if you do have doubts... you are going against your beliefs. And you know that is wrong, because anything you do against your beliefs is sin." - Rom_14:22-23 CEV Some commandments require many years of moral growth to get beyond a surface understanding of them: "Refrain utterly from adultery" (#44) — Obvious "Refrain utterly from... uncleanness" (#44) — More difficult and requires growth "Do all to the glory of God" (#45) — Lifetime struggle "Live not to yourselves, but to him who died for you" (#46) — Lifetime struggle
ROLE OF FORGIVENESS:	FORGIVENESS PLAYS LITTLE, IF ANY, ROLE IN FIRST PRINCIPLES; we either understand and accept, or we do not. THIS KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTOOD & ACCEPTED, HOWEVER, BECOMES THE BASIS OF DIVINE GRACE & FORGIVENESS OF PAST SINS - AND FUTURE - WHEN WE "MISS THE MARK" IN THE REALM OF WORKS & ACTIONS.	FORGIVENESS PLAYS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN COMMANDMENTS & ACTIONS AS GRACE CONTINUES TO HAVE ITS EFFECTIVE WORK; IT REALLY IS EVERYTHING - for "ALL sin and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
FELLOWSHIP INTERACTION: (COMMUNICATION, COMMONALITY)	BASIS OF INTER-ECCLESIAL FELLOWSHIP: we accept in fellowship all who believe and accept the same essential first principle teachings. Ecclesial Autonomy does not apply. BUT FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF PIONEER BRE AND "KEEP THE MAIN THINGS THE MAIN THINGS"; don't go off on tangents & interpretations & opinions - i.e., the "SMALL STUFF"; ITEMS OF WALK AND CONDUCT DON'T BELONG IN THIS CATEGORY. THIS IS THE "KNOWLEDGE" THAT BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY TO RESURRECTION AND THE "JUDGEMENT SEAT" THIS IS THE "KNOWLEDGE" THAT VALIDATES BAPTISM AND ACCESS TO THE DIVINE GRACE & FORGIVENESS THAT IS SO VITAL TO OVERCOMING TYPICALLY FLAWED WALK & CONDUCT IN THE "COMMANDMENTS" CATEGORY.	Administrated - or should be administrated - within the respective ecclesias & with much caution concerning individual ecclesial membership issues; each issue or problem is dealt with within the ecclesia on the basis of its individual circumstances and merits, exercising and respecting ecclesial autonomy . Such was the practice of early ecclesias until the early 1900s This area of interaction is fraught with the dangers of misguided and incorrect judgement, because human judgement is based on behavior but can't know the heart, the motivation and the "demons" an individual may be struggling with based on past circumstances they have come from in life. Use the apostle Paul's example (Rom_14;1-23) of handling the difficulties of believers that had come from the world of idol worship and the immoral habits of a previous life before Christ. It bears remembering that very often those who are having the greatest struggle with walk & conduct issues are those who need and can benefit the most from the support available from an effective, loving and understanding ecclesial environment. It is regrettable when such ends up being out of fellowship. alone and on their own resources.