

The Operational Functions of Faith, Hope & Love

I. Introduction & Definition

- A. Have. Pres.act.ind. ἔχω ^{#2192}: to have; [BDAG] **ἔ** to experience something: © of all conditions of body and soul; **ῥ**. gener. of conditions, characteristics, capabilities, emotions, inner possession.
- B. Abide. μένω ^{#3306}: *remain, stay*; of someone who does not leave a certain realm or sphere: *remain, continue, abide* (Jn. 5:38; 8:31; 12:46; 15:7,9ff.; 1st Tim. 2:15; 2nd Tim. 3:14; 1st Jn. 2:10,14,24,27; 3:9,14,15,17; 4:16; 2nd Jn. 2,9).
- C. The link between “abiding” and “having” is presented in various applications (Jn. 3:36; 5:38; 9:41; 1st Jn. 3:15; 2nd Jn. 9).

II. Development—the Mechanics of “Having” or “Abiding”

- A. Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
- B. Hope comes from the encouraging teaching of God’s Word which supplies the perseverance and like-mindedness for our daily tests (Rom. 15:4).
- C. Love comes from the authoritative teaching of God’s Word consistent with the exemplified life of faith (1st Tim. 1:5).
- D. The teaching ministry of the Word of God renews believers in their minds and equips them to have minds trained for righteousness (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:20-24).
- E. Transformed and renewed believers have their thinking molded after the pattern of Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:5).
- F. Transformed and renewed believers develop operational function thought patterns through deliberate practice (Phil. 4:8-9).

III. Application

A. Operational Function of Faith.

1. The operational function of faith is essential to a fervent effectual prayer ministry (Mt. 17:20; 21:21; 1st Cor. 13:2).
2. The operational function of faith is essential to the Father’s power being at work within us (Acts 14:9).
3. The operational function of faith promotes a relaxed mental attitude for matters of conscience and application (Rom. 14:22).
4. The operational function of faith is essential to fighting the good fight (1st Tim. 1:18-19).

B. Operational Function of Hope.

1. Faith introduces us to Hope. Hope comes from standing in grace as born-again believers looking forward to God’s eternal glory (Rom. 5:2). This hope is produced in even greater quantities when love sees us through tribulations (Rom. 5:3-5).
2. The operational function of hope motivates boldness in present ministry (2nd Cor. 3:12).
3. The operational function of hope can help others develop their operational function of faith (2nd Cor. 10:15).
4. The operational function of hope motivates experiential sanctification (1st Jn. 3:3).

C. Operational Function of Love.

1. The operational function of love is what sets true disciples apart from any other division of humanity (Jn. 13:35).
2. Love only becomes perfected when it is employed as an operational function (1st Jn. 4:16-17).
3. Other believers may struggle to know the operational function of love that is being applied for their sake (2nd Cor. 2:4).
4. The operational function of love provides the motivational virtue to maintain ministry objectivity with fellow believers no matter what sin barrier might otherwise present itself (1st Pet. 4:8).