

# ACTS OF HEAVEN

## ACTS OF HEAVEN: PRESENCE VS. PROGRAMS

In *Week 1* of our series we discovered the true meaning behind the word Jesus chose for Church, "Ekklesia". This was not merely a safe spiritual gathering but a world-changing force!

This week we will learn that Jesus has truly **EMPOWERED** His church to be His representatives on earth as it is in heaven. We have been given the **AUTHORITY** of the King to enact His will upon the earth. This is why we put our hope, not in programs, but in the Presence of God!

Let's briefly talk about Authority:

*18 "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

*19 "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them," (Matthew 18:18-20).*

When we operate in this authority, God shows up! When God shows up, heaven invades earth and we "Heavenize" this world! What would it look like if we welcomed the **MANIFEST PRESENCE** of God into our homes, schools, and offices? What is the difference between His presence and His manifest presence? What does it mean to be empowered by His presence? And how exactly do we walk in the authority Jesus has given to us to make a kingdom impact to this world? This morning we will be answering these questions and wrestling with ourselves as to whether or not we are living in this kingdom reality.

First let's define the word Manifest. Manifest simply is when something is made clear or obvious to the eye or mind. So if God's presence is made manifest it is clear or obvious to the eye or mind. With that understanding, you might be wondering, is there ever a time when God isn't manifest and yet still present? A great resource I found to help us understand this idea of God's presence comes from our trusted friends at the Bible Project. They write,

God's omnipresence is His attribute of being everywhere at once. He is omnipresent even when we do not experience His presence; He is here, even if we do not recognize Him. God's manifest presence is, of course, His presence made manifest—the fact that He is with us is made clear and convincing.

God's omnipresence applies to each Person in the Trinity: the Father (Isaiah 66:1), the Son (John 1:48), and the Holy Spirit (Psalm 139:7-8). The fact that God is omnipresent may or may not result in a special experience on our part. However, God's manifest presence is the result of His interaction with us overtly and unmistakably. It is then we experience God.