

Activating the Manifest Presence of God

Have you ever found yourself saying, “God, I know You’re real, but I want to experience You—right here, right now”? The Bible teaches that God is **omnipresent**, but there are moments in Scripture—and in our lives—when His **manifest presence** becomes real, tangible, and transformative. Moses refused to move without it. The early church gathered until it came. Prophets, priests, and ordinary people aligned their lives to make room for it. Today, we’re going to explore how we can *activate the manifest presence of God*—not through formulas or hype—but through **intentional choices**: obedience, unified worship, fervent prayer, sacrificial living, and deep communion with God. These are not performances to earn His presence—they are invitations that align our hearts with Heaven’s reality.

Let’s lean in with expectancy. The same God who filled the temple with His glory and the upper room with His Spirit is still responding to hungry hearts today. We usher in and activate His presence by embracing the following 8 actions:

1. Setting aside exclusive time for His presence

Mark 9:2–8 (NIV)

2 *After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them.*

3 *His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.*

4 *And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.*

5 *Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”*

6 *(He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)*

7 *Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”*

8 *Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.*

2. Depending on His presence and crying out for it

Exodus 33:14 *“The Lord replied, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’”*

This promise came **after Moses interceded** and pleaded for God not to send them without His presence. It was not just a mere nice to have for Moses. He depended on God’s manifest presence. **Moses didn’t treat God’s presence as optional; he treated it as essential. So should we.**

Exodus 33:15–19 *15 Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”*

17 *And the Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.” 18 Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.” 19 And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence.*

Jeremiah 29:12–14 *“Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you...”*

Wholehearted prayer → God promises to let Himself be found.

Daniel 9:3, 20–23 *“So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition... While I was still in prayer, Gabriel... came to me in swift flight...”*

Fervent intercession → divine presence and angelic visitation.

3. Walking in the true fast – justice, humility and compassion

Isaiah 58:9 "Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I."

This promise follows actions of **true fasting**—justice, humility, and care for the oppressed.

Condition: Acts of justice, humility, and compassion.

Isaiah 58:1-11

1 "Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins. **2** For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. **They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.** **3** 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' "Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. **4** Your fasting ends in quarrelling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. **5** Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? **6** "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? **7** Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? **8** Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. **9** Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, **10** and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. **11** The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

"The manifest presence of God isn't earned—it's invited through obedience, worship, and wholehearted pursuit."

4. Practising unified praise and worship

2 Chronicles 5:13–14 "The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the Lord...

Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God."

Psalm 22:3 "Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises."

Key Action: God inhabits (is enthroned on) the praises of His people

2 Kings 3:15 "But now bring me a harpist." *While the harpist was playing, the hand of the Lord came on Elisha."*

Key Action: Worship prepared the atmosphere for prophetic flow and presence.

Psalm 100:4 "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name."

Another way of seeing this is that as we give thanks and praise Him, so we see His gates and discover His courts. **"God shows up where He is wanted, and He stays where He is honoured."**

5. Waiting for extended periods in united faith-filled prayer

Acts 2:1–4 "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit..."

It's not enough to learn and grow by ourselves individually. There is something special about gathering together in one place.

Luke 24:49 "I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Unity and waiting in prayer brings the Spirit. Key actions here are obedience to wait, unity, and prayer. It is useful having extended times of praise, worship and prayer like *Ignite* at our church.

Acts 1:3 "After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days..."

If Jesus ascended on Day 40, and Pentecost came on Day 50 (Pentecost means 50), then the disciples waited in Jerusalem for about 10 days. Can you do that? We struggle with extended prayer for a few hours, yet we want major breakthroughs. **Can you P.U.S.H. – Pray Until Something Happens?**

Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Key Action: Unity in Jesus' name. When we gather, we are not physically together whilst just caught up with our own prayer needs. We are in unity about that which we are seeking God. **"Extended prayer may feel costly, but it creates space for heaven to invade earth."**

6. Practising a lifestyle of personal communion with God

Exodus 33:9–11 "As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses."

Moses intentionally pursued communion with God in the tent of meeting.

James 4:8 "Come near to God and he will come near to you."

Condition: Drawing near through humility, repentance, and seeking Him.

7. Praying and consecrating oneself to the Lord

Solomon assembled all of Israel for the dedication of the temple. He stood before the altar, raised his hands, and prayed a heartfelt prayer acknowledging God's faithfulness and asking for His continued presence.

God's dwelling with His people:

2 Chron 6:18 "But will God really dwell on earth with humans? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!"

A prayer for forgiveness and God's attentive presence:

2 Chron 6:40–42 "Now, my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place... Lord God, do not reject your anointed one. Remember the great love promised to David your servant."

2 Chronicles 7:1–2 "When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering... and the glory of the Lord filled the temple."

God responds tangibly to wholehearted dedication.

National revival starts with personal humility and corporate repentance.

The Conditional Promise

2 Chronicles 7:14 "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

8. Being obedient and set apart for God

Obedience Draws God's Manifestation

John 14:21 "Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me... and I too will love them and show myself to them."

2 Corinthians 6:16 "As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.'"

The context here is being **set apart** from idols and impurity. The condition is holiness and separation from ungodly influence.

2 Cor 6:14–15 *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.*

Obedience also includes embracing your assignment. He comes to empower you.

Haggai 1:13 & 2:4 "'I am with you,' declares the Lord."

 **Context:** People **restarted rebuilding the temple** after apathy and neglect.

The condition here is renewed obedience and commitment to God's priorities.

Matthew 28:19–20 (NIV) "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- The command: "**Go and make disciples...**" (obedient action)
- The promise: "**I am with you always...**" (His continual, manifest presence)
- The condition: This promise is given in the context of **obeying His commission.**

"God's presence is promised to those who say yes to His purpose, not just His comfort."

Conclusion

God's manifest presence is not reserved for Bible heroes or special occasions. It is the inheritance of every believer who dares to seek Him with their whole heart. "**The same Spirit who fell in Solomon's temple and the upper room is still drawn to hungry, holy hearts today.**"

When we humble ourselves in prayer, gather in unity, worship with abandon, and walk in obedience, God comes. He shows up in our services. He invades our homes. He transforms our hearts. This is not just about a feeling—it's about a **holy habitation**. He wants to walk with us, talk with us, and empower us to carry His glory into the world. So, let's not settle for head knowledge or religious routine. Let's be a people who contend for His presence—because when **He** comes, *everything changes*.