

Four Ways of Entering One's Calling
Part 2
The Second Way – Sanctified Initiative

- *The best and the most perfect example of how to enter into God's Calling for our lives is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- *The four Gospels provide us with a complete view of Christ's life and ministry.*
- *The four Gospels are not simply a repetition of the same events but actually provide four different perspectives into the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.*
- *Each of the four Gospels provides us a unique perspective and each carries with it sometimes subtle but important differences that unlock the mysteries of the Gospel.*
- *The unique attributes of the four gospel can be seen in a pattern that is seen in Revelation 4:7.*

Revelation 4:7 (ESV)

⁷the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight.

- *The Lion, the Ox, the face of a Man, and the Eagle each highlight one of the four Gospels and in the same order.*
- *Last Week we looked at the first Gospel, Matthew, and the first way to enter one's calling – Entering into God's Predestine Works.*
- *Each Gospel gives us insights into how to enter one's calling.*
- *Each of the four steps is progressive and leads to the next step until we are able to fully enter into the will of God for our lives.*
- *In Matthew, Jesus is pictured as the Lion, the One who is bold and confident.*
- *In Mark, Jesus is pictured as an Ox, the One who has set His shoulder to the plow and is pressing forward to the goal set before Him.*
- *The Second Way of Entering One's Calling is through Sanctified Initiative.*
- *A simple way to rephrase this second step would be:*
- *Don't Just Stand There Do Some Thing!!!!!!*

- *The second way provides balance and direction to the first way.*
- *The second Gospel, the Gospel of Mark, provides us with the example of this principle.*
- *The Gospel of Mark presents Jesus Christ as the Perfect Servant*
- *Jesus is seen in the Mark as the Ox – the Goal Centered Temperament.*
- *While in Matthew, Jesus’ genealogy is traced back to David, in Mark Christ’s birth is not even mentioned because the important thing about a servant is not his lineage but his service.*
- *In Mark, where Christ is depicted as the Ox, the Perfect Servant, Jesus is first seen coming to be baptized by John to fulfill His Father’s will and then He begins His ministry.*
- *The Greek word εὐθέως eutheōs means “straightway, immediately, just then, right away, at once, directly” and it is used 80 times in the New Testament and 40 of those times it is found in the Gospel of Mark.*
- *The Gospel of Mark is highlighted by the word, “immediately”.*
- *The word “immediately” emphasizes the principle of sanctified initiative – “do it now”.*
- *While taking hold of the fact that God has a predestine purpose for our life will give us vision and security, sanctified initiative puts legs to that vision.*

Psalm 144:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴That our oxen may be well laden; That there be no breaking in or going out; That there be no outcry in our streets.

Psalm 144:14 (NLT)

¹⁴and may our oxen be loaded down with produce. May there be no enemy breaking through our walls, no going into captivity, no cries of alarm in our town squares.

- *An Ox represents both strength and perseverance to the goal, being an animal that is used to pull a plow for many hours a day.*
- *An Ox has strength to carry heavy burdens.*
- *An Ox is one who is strong enough to pull a plow and disciplined enough to produce straight furrows.*

- *How different are Oxen from Cattle?*
- *There is no difference. Oxen are just cattle that have been taught to work.*
- *Therefore, we can say that Oxen are those cattle that have been subject to the training and discipline of the master.*

Some of the attributes of Oxen:

- 1) *Oxen have been taught discipline and have been taught not to misbehave.*
 - 2) *Oxen have learned to trust their master completely and are always at peace in the presence of their master.*
 - 3) *Oxen have learned not to react with fear to sudden situations but to trust the leading and presence of their master.*
 - 4) *Oxen have learned to work as a team with other Oxen so that they can pull the yoke that has been placed on them.*
- *Oxen are trained not born.*
 - *The difference between believers who are moving forward in the purposes of God and those who are not, has nothing to do with giftedness, but simply a willingness to submit to the Lord and to learn from Him.*
 - *“Cattle are ready learners and do not quickly forget what they have been taught. When their needs are met, oxen are patient, hardworking draft animals and will not balk at toiling at your side all day long.”*

Mark 10:32–34 (NKJV)

³²Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:
³³“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles;
³⁴and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

- *“Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem” – Christ, even as that Divine Ox Who was preparing the way of salvation for us, was unswervingly heading to Calvary and His ultimate sacrifice.*
- *Oxen are not only work animals but also one of the animals that were sacrificed on the altar.*
- *“and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed” – Jesus was leading the way and the disciples were astonished and terrified.*

- *Jesus was unwavering in His commitment to fulfill the Father's will and instead of hanging back He was pressing forward with steadfastness and it was His disciples who were reluctant.*
- *“Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him” – Clearly He knew what He would face in Jerusalem and explained to His disciples in detail how He would have to suffer so that He could redeem them.*

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)

²Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- *“who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross” – This is a perfect picture of sanctified initiative.*
- *Jesus kept the course because He had His eyes fixed on the ultimate goal.*
- *Jesus' focus was not just on Calvary but beyond His sufferings to the joy of being the Saviour of all Mankind.*
- *If our focus is on the hardships we will soon grow weary and give up.*

James 1:12 (NKJV)

¹²Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

- *Our focus and goal is not to be the hardships and the trials we must endure, but the “crown of life” that Christ has promised us.*

John 10:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

- *Christ came to give us life and when we receive Christ as our Lord and Saviour we have eternal life but when we submit to Christ as His disciples we begin to experience that abundant life – the crown of life.*
- *How was Christ able to keep the course that His Father had set before Him no matter how difficult and terrible it would be?*

John 16:32 (NKJV)

³²Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with

Me.

- *Just as an ox can plow all day and feel secure even in unsettling situations because he senses his master's presence and so Christ was always aware of His Father's presence.*
- *Sanctified initiative moves us into action so that we can be positioned to enter into God's predestined works for our lives.*
- *David is an example of how sanctified initiative positioned him to enter into God's predestined works for his life.*

1 Samuel 17:22–37 (NKJV)

²²And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers.

²³Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them.

²⁴And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid.

- *David just “happened” to be visiting his brothers at the army camp when Goliath began his daily raging against Israel.*
- *This was actually an opportunity from the Lord for David to exercise sanctified initiative.*

²⁵So the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel.”

²⁶Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

- *David's response is two fold: One was a question and the other a statement.*
- *A question: “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel?”*
- *God offers many promises, rewards and blessings to those that are willing to walk faithfully with Him.*
- *These promises are given to motive us to move in sanctified initiative.*
- *A statement: “For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”*
- *We need to be zealous to live lives that bring glory to God's name and not*

shame.

- *Many times Christians are so focused on what will make them “happy” that they live shameful, selfish lives and allow “Goliath” to mock the Lord.*
- *David was motivated by sanctified initiative both because he valued the reward that was offered and also he had a zeal for the Name of the Lord.*

²⁷And the people answered him in this manner, saying, “So shall it be done for the man who kills him.”

²⁸Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”

²⁹And David said, “What have I done now? Is there not a cause?”

³⁰Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did.

- *David was not deterred nor side tracked by his oldest brother’s derogator comments but simply continued to focus on the need that Israel faced at the moment.*
- *Sanctified initiative keeps us focus on the goal and helps to protect us from offenses and other distractions that would sidetrack us.*

Nehemiah 6:3 (NKJV)

³So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?”

- *The enemies of Israel did not sidetrack Nehemiah and in 52 days the walls and gates of Jerusalem were rebuilt and the city was secured.*

³¹Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent for him.

³²Then David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”

- *David’s response to king Saul was not, “God has told me that I am the one who is going to defeat Goliath”, but simply, “I see the need and don’t worry yourself anymore about him, I will take this guy out.”*

³³And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

³⁴But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock,

³⁵I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it.

³⁶Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.”

³⁷Moreover David said, “The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” And Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you!”

- “The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” – *David in the past had exercised sanctified initiative and experienced God’s faithfulness and this prepared him to face the challenge of Goliath.*
- *As we step out in faith as opportunities arise we will begin to experience more and more of God’s faithfulness.*
- *If we never begin to step out in sanctified initiative we will never enter our calling and never experience all that God has for our lives.*

Matthew 25:20–29 (NKJV)

²⁰“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’

²¹His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

²²He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’

²³His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

²⁴“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.

²⁵And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’

²⁶“But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.

²⁷So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

²⁹For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

- *This parable is about sanctified initiative and the theme of doing something with the things God has given us.*
- *Each of the three servants were given talents of money but were not given*

specific instructions on how to invest it.

- *The first two servants doubled their master’s money and received a great reward for their efforts.*
- *“Lord, I knew you to be a hard man,” – Many times when we lack sanctified initiative we blame God for the fact that our lives are not moving forward.*
- *“And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground” – A lack of sanctified initiative produces a distorted view of God and instead of having a reverential fear of God, we are afraid of Him and shrink back from fellowshiping with Him.*
- *“You wicked and lazy servant” – This statement summarizes what can hinder us from exercising sanctified initiative in our lives – wickedness and laziness.*

²⁹For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

- *The more we exercise sanctified initiative, the more we receive from the Lord so that we can do even more for the Lord.*

Proverbs 14:4 (ESV)

⁴Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of the ox.

- *“**abundant** crops come by the strength of the ox” – Sanctified initiative will bring forth a great abundance in our lives.*
- *“Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean” – We are going to make mistakes and not everything we do is going to work out perfectly but that is better than doing nothing and never making mistakes.*
- *The key for the principle of “sanctified initiative” to produce fruitfulness in our lives is to keep both “sanctified” and “initiative” together.*
- *Some people have a lot of initiative but it is not sanctified. In other words it is motivated by selfish ambition, fleshly thought or fleshly impulses.*
- *Our motivation is to glorify God and to glorify God in His way according to the patterns and principles we find in the Word of God.*
- *How do we maintain a vibrancy of sanctified initiative in our lives?*

- *Accountability and transparency is key for us to make sure that our motivation is sanctified and pure.*
- *Accountability and transparency will also help us to stay motivated and prevent us from becoming spiritually sluggish.*
- *In small decisions be ready for action at any moment and to step out in faith – be God’s minutemen.*

Exodus 4:1–2 (NKJV)

¹Then Moses answered and said, “But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you.’ ”

²So the LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A rod.”

- *“What is that in your hand?” – Many times in a moment of need the Lord has already provided, but it may appear as insignificant until we step out in sanctified initiative and allow God’s provision to be fully manifest.*
- *In large and important decisions seek clarity, confirmation and counsel before stepping out and taking action.*

2 Corinthians 13:1 (NKJV)

¹This will be the third time I am coming to you. “By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.”

- *In major decisions, confirming God’s direction before we act will protect us from being impetuous and making rash or fleshly decisions.*

Acts 12:5 (NKJV)

⁵Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

- *The early Church is a wonderful example of sanctified initiative.*
- *Herod imprisoned Peter with the intent to execute him but the Church immediately responded with fasting and prayer, which resulted in God delivering Peter.*
- *How many ministries and churches have not come forth because of a lack of initiative and motivation from the people of God.*
- *What makes a great man or woman of God? Does it originate from God or does it originate from man?*
- *God calls and then men respond.*
- *Heart Motivation vs Commitment to Perform*

2 Corinthians 8:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago;

¹¹but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have.

¹²For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.

2 Corinthians 8:10–12 (NCV)

¹⁰This is what I think you should do: Last year you were the first to want to give, and you were the first who gave.

¹¹So now finish the work you started. Then your “doing” will be equal to your “wanting to do.” Give from what you have.

¹²If you want to give, your gift will be accepted. It will be judged by what you have, not by what you do not have.

- *Don't speculate on what you would do if you had more time, money, or other resources but take what is in your hand now and do something with it.*
- *Good intentions without action equal zero. - God's Math*
- *God's Sovereignty vs Man's Responsibility.*
- *Sanctified Initiative is Man's Responsibility.*
- *We all have had opportunities from God that we have failed to respond to but what is important is how we are going to respond to the opportunity that He has set before us today.*

Philippians 3:12–14 (NCV)

¹²I do not mean that I am already as God wants me to be. I have not yet reached that goal, but I continue trying to reach it and to make it mine. Christ wants me to do that, which is the reason he made me his.

¹³Brothers and sisters, I know that I have not yet reached that goal, but there is one thing I always do. Forgetting the past and straining toward what is ahead,

¹⁴I keep trying to reach the goal and get the prize for which God called me through Christ to the life above.

- *We can start off by thanking God that today He has given us the opportunity to respond with sanctified initiative.*
- *If you have never received Christ now is the opportunity to say yes to Jesus and repent and put your faith in Him.*

- *If your spiritual life has not been moving forward then you can respond right now by making a step forward to say yes to this opportunity.*

Seek accountability and transparency in someone. Baby steps.

- *If you have been stepping out in sanctified initiative then you can thank God for what He has done and we can ask Him to help us deepen that commitment in an even greater way.*