

Ten Reasons why Many Aspire but Few Attain

1. They have never developed a heart for God. Ps 63:1 — They do not thirst for Him, long for Him, and earnestly seek Him. Josh 22:5 — They do not cling to Him and serve Him with all their heart and all their soul (their very life). Pr 19:23 — They do not fear Him. Dt 11:13-18 — Their hearts turn aside after other gods (Jer 24:7). Eph 6:6 — Their obedience is merely external. Ths 3:5. Heb 10:22 — They do not draw near to Him. In a human embryo, the heart develops first. Praying with wife or husband or person in the bunk next to you first thing in the morning helps this heart to develop. So does taking long walks.

2. They have never learned to hate sin. Pr 5:21-23 — They do not understand that God sees and judges all that they do. Mk 6:12 — *Repent* in the Amplified Bible means to abhor sin. Ps 51:1-4 Sin is knowing the right thing to do and not doing it (Jms 4:17). Your conscience knows if you sin. You may not be aware of your faults, but reproof and discipline train you to recognize your lacks, and when you know, then they become sin. Ps 38:17-18 — They do not have the sorrow that leads to repentance (2 Cor 7:9-10). Rom 14:23 — Sin is anything that is not from faith. Do you hate it when you don't do what you know is right? That is, do you take it seriously? If not, why?

3. They never developed a hunger for God's word (knowing, hearing, and obeying). Jn 14:21 — "The person who has my commands and keeps them is the one who really loves me, and whoever really loves me will be loved by my Father. And I (too) will love him and show (reveal, manifest) myself to him. I will let myself be clearly seen by him and make myself real to him." Ezra 7:10 — Ezra had set his heart to seek (yearn for), obey, *and pass on to others* God's word. Dt 17:18-19 Phil 3:10 The more you hear the more you are responsible for. But we don't want to remain babies all our lives.

4. They refuse to burn bridges behind them (give up things, put aside their own desires). Lk 14:26 — A partial list: father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, even his own life; Mk 10:29 — houses, farm. Phil 3:13 — the past. Lk 9:23 — "If anyone wills to come after me let him deny himself — that is, disown himself, lose sight of himself and his own interests — and take up his cross and follow me. Jh 12:25 Armies burn bridges so that 1) the enemy can't follow, and 2) so that they themselves can't retreat. Our Master called us to a radical severing of our connection with any source of life other than Him, like cutting a baby's umbilical cord.

5. They lack wholeheartedness (have a divided heart). Phil 3:13 — "It is my one aspiration: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal . . ." Isa 50:7 — deliberate, determined, setting my face like flint . . . Heb 12:1-2 — stripping off and throwing aside every encumbrance, running with patient endurance and steady and active persistence the appointed course of the race that is set before us, looking away from all that will distract, fixing our eyes on Yahshua. . . Rom 12:11 — not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit . . . Everything must be judged by whether it accomplishes our Father's purpose: a. Does it help us to grow as disciples (in obedience)? b. Does it contribute to our service of our Master? c. What benefit will it actually have five years from now? Ten? Fifteen? In eternity? The condition of your heart is revealed when you are called to do things that you don't like to do. "The just measure of our love is in our will." No one can do everything with all his heart unless he cries out for grace. Dt 20:1-9 — The reason for a divided heart is unbelief (verse 4). Heb 3:12 "The way back to our first love is clearly marked: Put away the hindrance of a divided heart."

6. They have an independent spirit that was never dealt with. Ex 32:1, 25-26 — They are not self-controlled and are not for the Sovereign (not consecrated or dedicated). Mt 12:30 Pr 18:1-2 — They are seeking their own desire and have their own mind. Rom 12:3 — They have an exaggerated opinion of their own importance. Phil 2:1-5 An independent spirit is a spirit that is not dependent on the Holy Spirit. It expresses itself in lawless deeds, not seeking covering and not seeking our Father. The more responsible a person is, the more division and disorder results from an independent action. A sent one cannot have even a hint of independence. This is why our Father disciplines us and arranges circumstances to humble us. We will all be tested to see if we will divide.

7. They never learned to take rebuke, correction, or instruction. Pr 10:17 — They are not on the path of

life. Pr 29:1 — The consequences of rejecting reproof are deadly — like deliberate sin. Pr 21:1 Pr 17:10 Pr 27:6

8. They are unfaithful in little things (tolerating little sins). Gal 5:22 — Faithfulness is the fruit of being attached to the Vine (to Him who is faithful and true). Ps 31:23 — How He deals with the faithful. Pr 2:21-22 — How He deals with the treacherous. Lk 16:10 — “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is dishonest and unjust in a very little thing is also dishonest and unjust in much.” Mt 13:12

9. They have a root of bitterness in their heart. Heb 12:15 — People become bitter because of a lack of grace (they fall from grace or fail to secure it due to pride). The life of a disciple cannot be lived apart from grace. Only the proud would try. The resulting failure can produce bitterness. Bitterness is so powerful that it is capable of defiling the whole community. Eph 4:30-32 — People become bitter because of an offended heart — offended at God for the circumstances or offended at their brother for his sins or faults. Mt 18:23-35 — You can know for sure you are bitter if you are being tortured (v. 34-35). Two ways to avoid bitterness: a) Consider the forgiveness you have received and fully forgive those who have sinned against you — and bear with those who are faulty (Mk 11:25; Col 3:13) b) Give thanks for the circumstances that are rooting out the power of the flesh from your life.

10. They don't stop and think. 1 Cor 14:2 — Children are impulsive. They do not consider the outcome of their actions. They do not consider how they affect others. Their thoughts are self-centered. They are inconsiderate. They (we) must be trained to fear. Pr 9:10 2 Tim 2:7 — The Scriptures make considerable use of the word Consider and call us to meditate on many things (2 Tim 4:3-4; Jms 2:12; 1 Cor 1:21; etc.).