

## REACHING FORWARD

### Introduction

Philippians 3: 13: “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.”

I have been rereading some of the books that helped me along the way. John Maxwell has been one of those persons who has probably helped as many people reflect on the necessary things of leadership and success as anyone in the past thirty years.

A lot of what I am saying tonight comes from his book “Failing Forward.” I encourage you if you are serious about moving forward in your life to read the book.

Maxwell suggests that three things become integral when moving toward success:

- Knowing your purpose in life.
- Growing to reach your potential.
- Sowing seeds that benefit others.

All of these things are a part of a process that allows us to achieve the potential that God has placed in each of his children

- 1). People Think Failure Is Avoidable—It’s Not.
  - a). You will learn lessons.
  - b). There are not mistakes—only lessons.
  - c). A lesson is repeated until it is learned.
  - d). If you don’t learn the easy lessons, they get harder.  
(Pain is one way the universe gets your attention)
  - e). You’ll know you’ve learned a lesson when your actions change.

- 2). People Think Failure Is An Event—It’s Not.

Maxwell’s thesis is that success is not a destination—not a place where you arrive one day. Instead, it is the journey you take. And whether you succeed comes from what you do day to day. In other words, success is a process.

Failure works the same way. It’s some place you arrive. Just as success is not an event, neither is failure. It’s how you deal with life along the way. No one can

conclude that he has failed until he breathes his last breath. Until then, he's still in process, and the jury is still out.

### 3). People Think Failure Is Objective—It's Not.

You are the only person who can label what you do a failure. Did you know that entrepreneurs almost never get their first business off the ground? Or their second? Or their third? According to Tulane University business professor Lisa Amos, the average for entrepreneurs is 3.8 failures before they finally make it in business.

They are not deterred by problems, mistakes, or errors. Why? Because they don't see setbacks as failures. They recognize that three steps forward and two steps back still equals one step forward. As a result they overcome average and become achievers.

**So what prevents us from trying and accomplishing great things?**

#### 1. Lack of Confidence.

Fear of failure paralyzes us. If you're going to be a great leader, and if you're going to accomplish anything in life, you have to be willing to fail along the way.

#### 2. Lack of Inspiration.

Weed 'inspiration killers' out of your life. Detach yourself as much as possible from the things that discourage and drain you. From where do your best ideas come? When do they come? What inspires you?

Identify the things that bolster your faith and make you want to attempt great things, and then incorporate them into your weekly routine.

#### 3. Lack of Energy.

Even if you have the greatest ideas in the world, you need the energy to make them happen. What actions, habits, and environments give you energy.

#### 4. Lack of Persistence.

Even with confidence, inspiration, and energy, you still need persistence to become successful. Don't give up on your dreams. Just because something didn't go as planned the first time doesn't always mean it should be abandoned. Adapt, analyze, evaluate and keep trying.

Thomas Edison understood the value of persistence. He is reported to have tried over 1,000 different elements before he found the one that made the light bulb work.

If you look back over your life, you will discover every great accomplishment was the result of trying something. Great lives are the result of great attempts.