

Copyright © 2008 Mark Gorman www.markgorman.com

To learn more about Mark Gorman, visit the Mark Gorman Webgroup at www.markgorman.com

If you would like to become a Ministry Partner, or if you would like to order any books, CDs, DVDs or Mp3s by Mark Gorman, visit our secure online store at <https://www.markgorman.com/store/default.asp>

We've just recently introduced the new "Mark Gorman Video iPod Collection". To learn more, use this link: <https://www.markgorman.com/Specials.UltimateiPod.htm>

Mark Ministries
1-866-663-2043
www.markgorman.com

February 15, 2008

Dear Friends,

Today is a special day, in history. And, although I have already sent you a Leadership Teaching E-mail this week, I feel that this historical significance of this date, merits acknowledgement.

February 15, 1898, the USS Maine, an American Battleship, sunk in the harbor of Havana, Cuba. This act of aggression was the catalyst which started the Spanish American War, which eventually resulted in the liberation, not only of Cuba, but also of the Philippine Islands, from the oppressive rule of Spain.

Yes, that's right, America got involved in defending people who were not citizens of our country. And, in order to help those people, we sent our brave soldiers to another country, to fight for the freedom of that country's citizens.

You may respond by saying that Spain started the "fight" when they sunk our battleship. But, why was the Battleship Maine in the Havana harbor?

Cuba had experienced slave trade longer than any other country in the Americas, from 1521 to the late 1870's.

So, when a Creole farmer started a revolution in 1868 – a revolt against the oppression, Spain's army launched a campaign against these "freedom fighters", in an attempt to squelch the Cuban people's dream to be free from Spanish rule and domination. By 1895, more than 200,000 Spanish soldiers occupied Cuba, forcing many thousands of Cubans into concentration camps, where many died of starvation and disease.

In response to an outcry by the people of America, who were horrified by the terrible mistreatment of the Cuban people, US President William McKinley sent the USS Maine, to simply sit in the Havana Harbor. He was sending a message to Spain's army, "America's watching."

Although we never displayed any signs of aggression or attack, the Spanish army "picked a fight" they would later regret, when they sunk the USS Maine. Shortly thereafter, America declared war – a war which we eventually won.

But, shortly before the war began, a Lieutenant in the US Army became a hero whose story would still be told today, more than 100 years later.

In fact, some of you may be familiar with a presentation I gave at a convention in St. Louis several years ago. More than 40,000 people were in attendance at a business convention when I presented "Getting A Message To Garcia". Since then, recordings of that presentation have been used by departments of Ford Motor Company, Campbell's Soup, Corel Software, Coca Cola, Office Depot, and many others. It has been translated into many languages around the world, and we regularly receive comments from people who have heard that presentation, acknowledging the impact it has had on their lives.

Most people don't know that I also wrote a booklet to accompany that presentation, by the same title, "Getting A Message To Garcia".

If you've already read it, you may want to skip the rest of this e-mail. But if you haven't, I encourage you to take a few minutes to read this brief study in Excellence:

"Getting A Message To Garcia"
A Study In Excellence
By Mark Gorman

Over 100 years ago, a brief article was written to fill an empty space in a magazine which was otherwise ready for publication. This seemingly insignificant work, about a soldier in the U.S. Army, has since become one of the most published documents in the history of printed word. "A Message To Garcia" has been translated into every major language on earth, with over 100 million copies in print. What was the significance of this article, which caused such a stir around the world?

In 1899, a man by the name of Elbert Hubbard wrote an editorial for a small magazine called The Philistine. Over tea, Hubbard was discussing the Spanish-American War with his family. Everyone had been cheering General Calixto Garcia, the leader of the Cuban rebel forces, as the key to winning the war in Cuba, when Hubbard's son, Bert, put forth this argument. "In my mind", ventured Bert, "the real hero of the war was not General Garcia, but Lieutenant Rowan, the man who got the message to Garcia." His son's words leaped in Hubbard's heart.

Hubbard wrote the article, "A Message to Garcia" and the edition went to print. He thought little more about it until the magazine began getting requests for re-prints of that particular edition. More and more requests for re-prints came in until the magazine was literally swamped. Puzzled by the overwhelming number of orders, Hubbard asked why people were

interested in that particular copy of the magazine. He was surprised to learn that the demand was for the "filler" article he had written about Rowan. Orders came in for 100,000 copies, 500,000 copies, 1,000,000 copies. Eventually, Hubbard was forced to simply grant permission to those who wanted large numbers of re-prints, because of his limited ability to publish in those quantities. Why are so many people interested in an article about some unknown lieutenant by the name of Andrew Summers Rowan? The reason is: everyone is looking for individuals such as Rowan.

In 1895, the little island nation of Cuba was struggling to be free from Spanish rule. The Spanish soldiers who occupied the island oppressed and brutalized the people. They desperately wanted to be free. The United States had a strong interest in Cuba, not only because of its geographical proximity to the United States, but also because of our financial investments there. By 1897, the situation in Cuba had deteriorated to the point that there was rioting in the streets of Havana between nationalists and Spanish soldiers. President McKinley dispatched the battleship Maine as a visible indicator of the United States' presence in Cuba. The American battleship, sitting in Havana harbor, sent a clear signal to the Spanish government of our country's resolve to protect our interests in Cuba. Although a formidable presence, the Maine did not engage in any hostile act against Spain.

On February 15, 1898, however, an explosion rocked the Havana harbor sinking the U.S. battleship. The American people were greatly alarmed over this open act of aggression less than 100 miles off our country's coast. McKinley sent an ultimatum to Spain to get out of Cuba. By April, the United States was at war with Spain. Ultimately, the Spanish-American War proved to liberate, not only the nation of Cuba, but the Philippine Islands, as well.

Just before declaring war, President McKinley was meeting with Colonel Arthur Wagner, head of the Bureau of Military Intelligence for the United States. "Where", asked President McKinley, "can I find a man who will carry a message to Garcia?" Co-operation between the rebel forces in Cuba and the United States was essential to the success of the campaign. It was vital to quickly communicate with the leader of the rebels, General Calixto Garcia, a Cuban-born Creole. General Garcia was somewhere in the mountains of Cuba leading the rebel troops in their fight for independence. He was a hunted man by the Spanish army. No one knew his exact whereabouts.

Colonel Wagner did not hesitate in his answer to the President. "I have a man - a young officer, Lieutenant Andrew Summers Rowan. If anybody can get a message to Garcia, Rowan can."

An hour later, Col. Wagner stood before Lieutenant Rowan. "Young man," said the superior officer, "you must carry a message to General Garcia, who will be found somewhere in the eastern part of Cuba...You must plan and act for yourself. The task is yours and yours only." Col. Wagner then shook Rowan's hand and repeated, "Get that message to Garcia." Without asking one question, Rowan left to find Garcia.

Rowan delivered the message to Garcia and the response got back to McKinley without Rowan ever asking, "Where is he? What does he look like? Who are his contacts? How do I get there?" He simply took the orders and did what he was asked to do. Is there a Rowan among us? Is there somebody who can get a message to Garcia without having to do an interrogation of his senior officer first? Is there someone who can get the job done without needing to have his employer hold his hand until the task is completed? If not, the boss might as well do it himself.

Is there somebody that I can just ask to accomplish a task, and the next time I see them I am told, "I'm finished with that. What do you want me to do next?" Where can I find someone like that? Where is he? Can I find a Rowan? Is there someone who can get a message to Garcia?

They are out there. There's just not enough of them. There are probably some Rowans reading this right now. There will always be a few of those individuals who are extraordinary. Extraordinary means above ordinary. Those who don't just do what is expected of them; they surpass the expectations of others, in their pursuit of excellence. Here is an excerpt from Elbert Hubbard's article written over 100 years ago. It sounds as if it could have been written today:

The point I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia. Rowan took the letter and did not ask, "Where is he at?" By the eternal, there is a man whose form should be cast in deathless bronze and the statue placed in every college of the land. It is not book-learning young men need, nor instruction about this and that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies: do the thing - "Carry a message to Garcia!"...You reader, put this matter to a test. You are sitting now in your office. Six clerks are within call. Summon any one and make this request: "Please look in the encyclopedia and make a brief memorandum for me concerning the life of Correggio." Will the clerk quietly say, "Yes, sir," and go do the task. On your life, he will not. He will look at you out of a fishy eye and ask one or more of the following questions: Who was he? Which encyclopedia? Where is the encyclopedia? Was I hired for that? Don't you mean Bismarck? What's the matter with Charlie doing it? Is he dead? Is there any hurry? Shan't I bring the book and let you look it up yourself? What do you want to know for?... Now if you are wise you will not bother to explain to your assistant that Correggio is indexed under the C's, not under the K's, but you will smile sweetly and say, "Never mind," and go look it up yourself.

People haven't changed in the last 100 years, have they? Every time I give someone a task and they start asking me a hundred questions, I immediately say to myself, "This poor soul could not get a message to Garcia." Those who can get a message to Garcia are rare. The majority is satisfied with the status quo - with simply being average. I don't understand that mentality. I can't comprehend the paradigm of being satisfied with average. You are going to succeed because you decide to succeed. You are going to succeed because you make the choice that you will not let life choose for you. I will choose for myself. You can choose to live a life of "barely making it through" or choose a life of excellence.

I am reminded of an incident found in the Bible in the book of Mark. Jesus and his disciples had been traveling and were hungry. Jesus walked over to a beautiful fig tree, but it bore no figs. Jesus cursed the tree for not producing fruit. On the next day, as they passed by, one of the disciples noted that the fig tree had already withered and died.

Recently, while reading this story, I noted something, which I had overlooked on all of my previous readings. The scripture says that the tree was barren because figs were not in season. My obvious question was, "Lord, weren't you a bit harsh in your judgment of the fig tree? No trees had figs at that time of the year."

Later that same night, at 2am, I sat straight up in bed as God spoke to me. He said, "If all you do is what comes naturally, I'm not impressed."

God does not expect us to do only what comes naturally. He expects us to do far beyond that which is convenient and comfortable. For us to remain in the natural flow of our existence is mediocrity. Average is the last thing God wants you and me to be. Jesus used the fig tree as an example of what he wants of us. He expected the tree to be productive and to bear fruit year round. Why settle for mediocrity when you have the option to be better than most? If you can produce one day out of the year, why not produce 365 days a year? Why do we have to do only what everyone else is doing? Why can't we be above average?

Nobody ever won an Olympic event by doing what came naturally. The athlete who will take home the gold must push beyond the limits of what has already been done. I am tired of average. I feel as Hubbard felt when he penned these words:

We have recently been hearing much maudlin sympathy expressed for the downtrodden denizen of the sweatshop and the homeless wanderer searching for honest employment and with it all often go many hard words for the men in power. Nothing is said about the employer who grows old before his time in a vain attempt to get frowsy ne'er-do-wells to do intelligent work; and his long patient striving with "help" that does nothing but loaf when his back is turned....Have I put the matter too strongly? Possibly I have, but when all the world has gone a-slumming, I wish to speak a word of sympathy for the man who succeeds...My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the boss is away as well as when he is at home. And the man, who, when given a letter for Garcia, quietly takes the missive, without asking any idiotic questions, and with no lurking intention of chucking it into the nearest sewer, or of doing anything else but deliver it, never gets laid off, nor has to go on a strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted. His kind is so rare that no employer can afford to let him go. He is wanted in every city, town, and village; in every office, shop, store and factory. The world cries out for such. He is needed and needed badly, the man who can carry a message to Garcia.

Don't ever let it be said that someone else expected more of you than you expected of yourself. If anyone finds fault in a job which you have done that is less than excellent, don't make excuses. Admit that it was not your best. Don't stand up and try to defend yourself. Why settle for average, when excellence is an option? I'm weary of people saying that it's not in their nature to demand more of themselves. They may say, "My personality is different than yours. I'm not as aggressive as you are. It's not my nature."

My answer to them is, "Change." Really, it's just a decision away. Make a decision to change.

A profound study on the subject of excellence can be found in the Bible. The book of Matthew tells of a man preparing for a trip to a far country who gathered his servants and entrusted his goods to them. The scripture says that to one, he gave five talents; to another he gave two; and to another, one. To each, he gave according to their own ability. He who had received the five talents went and traded them and made another 5 talents. Likewise, he who had two went and gained two more also. But, he who had received one talent went and buried his lord's money. After a long time, the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. He who had received five talents came and brought another five talents. His lord said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter now into the joy of your lord". He also, who had received two talents came and brought two talents more. His lord said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many. Enter into the

joy of your lord". Then he who had received 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. I was afraid and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look there, have what is yours. His lord answered and said unto him, "Wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed. So, you ought to have deposited money with the bankers and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore, take the talent from him and give it to him that has ten talents. 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." (Matthew 25:14)

This servant thought he would gain his master's approval by not losing the one talent that had been given him. He thought he had accomplished something by not having lost it or gambled it away. The master, however, saw it differently. The master was not expecting his servants to do only what came naturally. He wanted them to excel. He wanted them to go beyond what was average. Two of them did. They doubled what he gave to them - a 100% increase. The foolish servant's mentality was to "just get by".

I have met so many people in my lifetime who have this attitude: "Let me do only what I absolutely have to do to make it through. I am not going to do anything with excellence."

What are you doing with what you have been given? Are you only producing as much as everyone else around you? Is your mindset like that of the foolish servant?

Werner Von Braun, head engineer of NASA's Space Research and Development for the Apollo IV Project said this concerning the Saturn V rocket, which was used to propel the spacecraft for that mission, *"The Saturn V has 5,600,000 parts. Even if we had a 99% reliability, there would still be 5,600 defective parts. Yet, the Apollo IV mission flew a textbook flight with only two anomalies occurring, demonstrating a reliability of 99.999%." If an average automobile with 13,000 parts were to have the same reliability, it would have its first defective part in about a hundred years."*

Why aren't our automobiles built with the same precision as the Saturn V rocket? Because NASA holds themselves to a higher set of standards than the automobile industry. We need to be like NASA. God is looking for us to pursue excellence - to set a higher standard for ourselves than everyone else sets.

I want you to ask yourself, "Could I get a message to Garcia? If I were told that he was hidden somewhere in the jungles of Cuba, could I get a message to him? If I didn't know what he looked like, or where to find him, could I do it?" If you are desperate to succeed, you will find a way. If you purpose in your heart to succeed, you will!

We have become experts with excuses - of why we can't do what we are supposed to do. Why can't we just take a job and do it with excellence? People tell me all kinds of excuses of why they can't do what they're supposed to do.

Be a Rowan. Do it! Just make a decision. Make a choice. Something may slow me down. I may get bogged down in my tracks. There may be times I find myself drowning in quicksand, times I have to hang on to make it through, times when I feel so downtrodden, I don't know if I can put one foot in front of the other, but I will not quit. I will not give up. Quitting is not even an option. I will accomplish the task that is set before me. I will pursue excellence in every area of

my life. Even though I may fall down, I will get back up. I will dust myself off, and keep pressing on until I win.

God, give us people like Rowan! People who don't need somebody to pet them every time something goes wrong. People who don't need someone to baby them every time things don't go the way they thought it should.

If I were asked to get a letter to Garcia, I know I could. You may think that's arrogance on my part, but it's not. It's confidence. I know that if you handed me a letter and said, "Get this to Garcia." I could get it there. I want you to get a message to Garcia, too. Be the best! If you have been told all your life that you cannot achieve, don't listen to those lies. It doesn't matter what negative things others may have told you.

Make a decision. Success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration. If you will just put in the effort, you can do it. Are you willing to make the decision to get the job done with excellence? Are you prepared to carry the message to Garcia?

Hanging on my office wall is a plaque with this inscription:
**Excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise;
risking more than others think is safe;
dreaming more than others think is practical
and expecting more than others think is possible.**

Choose to live a life of excellence. Pursue the goal. Dream the dream. You can do it. Get the message to Garcia!

If this Leadership Teaching challenged or inspired you, I encourage you to share it with a friend – with several. Encourage them to subscribe to the list, so they can start receiving these Leadership Teaching E-mails on a regular basis.

Also, you can purchase a DVD of the presentation “Getting A Message To Garcia” which was recorded in St. Louis in that arena with an audience of more than 40,000 people in attendance. We have it packaged in a 2-disc set, both the Audio CD and the Video DVD of the same presentation. If you’d like to get a copy for yourself, use the following link to order. (If you would like to purchase them in bulk, as other companies have done, please contact our office, for more information on discounted pricing when purchasing in larger quantities. 615-591-5900)

Now, here’s the link: <https://www.markgorman.com/store/display.asp?page=7>

Copyright © 2008 Mark Gorman www.markgorman.com

To learn more about Mark Gorman, visit the Mark Gorman Webgroup at www.markgorman.com

If you would like to become a Ministry Partner, or if you would like to order any books, CDs, DVDs or Mp3s by Mark Gorman, visit our secure online store at <https://www.markgorman.com/store/default.asp>

We've just recently introduced the new "Mark Gorman Video iPod Collection". To learn more, use this link: <https://www.markgorman.com/Specials.UltimateiPod.htm>

Mark Ministries

1-866-663-2043

www.markgorman.com