

By Jim Langham

For Gimpy, 2011 has been a matter of survival. Several months ago, a young man in the area sensing danger for the young turtle, rescued Gimpy, took him to his room, created a suitable environment and adopted the turtle as a special friend. Gimpy was well taken care of and loved as a special pet.

All was well for Gimpy for several months, but that all changed a few weeks ago when a devastating fire destroyed part of the home in which Gimpy was living. The upper and rear parts of the home were completely destroyed, including the room in which Gimpy lived. Unfortunately, when family members were hurriedly trying to remove all belongings they could, no one thought of Gimpy.

That afternoon, when Gimpy's special friend arrived from school, the first thing he asked his father was whether or not anyone had rescued Gimpy. Sadly, the father admitted that no one had thought of Gimpy. To make things worse, the father knew that the ceiling of Gimpy's room had collapsed. Nevertheless, the father climbed to his son's room. Sure enough, he found what he suspected. The ceiling had collapsed on Gimpy's home and the turtle was nowhere to be seen. A dismal day had become even darker.

The young man's heart was broken. Nothing, even his high school football letters and jacket, could compare to the sure loss of Gimpy. The very shelter where he had been rescued earlier in the summer had collapsed around him.

Throughout the evening, family members sought to reclaim items from the remains of the fire. Suddenly, several hours later, one of the rescuers came out of the house with a small "crawling" object in his hand.

"What is this," he said.

Excited, the sad young man reached into the rescuer's hand and pulled out Gimpy, a little shaken, but apparently alive and well. The rescuer had been rummaging through the first floor living room and discovered Gimpy crawling around, disoriented, but very healthy. The determined turtle had now survived at least two crises this year, this probably the most traumatic of all.

Somehow, Gimpy had made his way from the crushed aquarium of his upstairs room, down the steps to the first floor and into the safety of the living room, one part of the house that had been spared. While no one knows how the "turtle miracle" happened, Gimpy had immediately become an example of one who never gives up and who never ceases to flea to safety, regardless of how slow he moved.

But the story of the "rescues" in Gimpy's home weren't over. Apparently there were several very meaningful family pictures hanging on the wall of one of the rooms. All of the pictures were destroyed except for one extraordinary family air loom hanging in their midst. Ironically, it was a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus hanging in the midst of the family members. There it hung in all of its beauty in the midst of all of the tarnished destruction surrounding it.

But there was one more precious memento remaining for the discovery. As the parents of the home searched through the relics that were destroyed in the fire, they found one more item to recover, one that totally survived the fire without a tarnish. It was the family Bible they had been given when they were married. There it was, God's Word totally preserved in the midst of the fire that had destroyed the home.

Once again, the Child born in the manger had been true to His Word. "Heaven and earth may pass away but my Word will never pass away."

And what about Gimpy's miraculous recovery? Once again, the Babe in the Manger had grown to say, "If my Heavenly Father cares for the creatures of the field, how much more will He care for you, oh you of little faith?"

More than likely Gimpy doesn't understand any of this, but he continues to sense the

experience of being cared for in his new home in the new room of the young man in a house down the street.