

Lonely Trail of the Gimper

You won't find one in the National Wildlife Federation's *Manual of Rare Species*. But rare it is.

Chuck Swindoll, author, senior pastor of Stonebriar Community Church in Frisco, Texas, and radio preacher, said this about *gimpers* in his book *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*:

"Like the bald eagle, the prairie bison and the whooping crane, *gimpers* are seldom seen on our landscapes. Occasional sightings have reportedly occurred in nursing homes, on college campuses, in business offices, on athletic teams and among groups of salesmen. You may even find a few in churches."

One of the reasons they're hard to spot, Swindoll added, "is that they never run in packs. They're loners."

Okay, so what is a *gimper*, anyway? Here are some clues Swindoll gave:

- A *gimper* friend to the poor was Mother Teresa.
- As a football strategist, Vince Lombardi qualified.
- As a creative thinker, Leonardo da Vinci belonged to the club.
- A *gimper* president was Abraham Lincoln.
- Thomas Edison was a *gimper* inventor.

And there are others much less famous but equally impressive.

Still can't figure it out? Not many dictionaries carry the definition, but the *American Heritage College Edition* defines *gimp* as "spirit, or pep."

Dr. M.R. DeHaan, Bible teacher, founder of the Radio Bible Class, and co-editor of the monthly devotional guide *Our Daily Bread*, mentioned a *gimper* as "one who aspires to excel, to be different." A *gimper*, Swindoll said, is "committed to the core – thoroughly and unequivocally. His roots of dedication result in the rich fruit of determination, excellence and achievement."

Setting their sights high, *gimpers* drive toward the goal, absorbed in the passion of quality.

Did the Lord Jesus make reference to *gimpers*? No doubt about it. In no uncertain terms, He implied how important these rare individuals were to Him when He delivered His immortal Sermon on the Mount message. People ask you to go a mile? Go two. Others love their friends and hate their enemies? Gimpers love their enemies and pray for their persecutors.

Are you a *gimper*? Am I a *gimper*? We ought to be striving to be.

And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others (Matthew 5:47 NIV).

– Beecher Hunter