

Space Ray Pathfinders

#5 – Space Bears

“BAD NEWS – I think Gramps is having one of those moments that only old people have... He said he's gonna talk to us clubbers about space bears,” one clubber told a couple others.

When the Space Ray Pathfinders club meeting began, that Saturday, no one was sure how it would all turn out. They had opened in prayer asking God for His blessings and guidance. It also included prayer for Jimmy that was in the hospital with something wrong with his eyes.

The club's adult leader, loved by each of the clubbers, began with, “Raise your hand if you think there are bears in space! Go ahead – don't be shy. If you think there are bears of some kind in space raise your hand.” There were no hands raised, but a few snickers from two of the preteen clubbers in the back row.

“Many of my favorite lessons about rockets and astronauts is about astronaut training – how long it takes and what's in it.” Gramps scratched his head with one finger and said, “It sure isn't hard for me to believe that every group of new young people want to get things done, make things happen, faster than the group before them. Especially when it comes to schooling, young people – probably you too, want to snap your fingers or flip a switch and zoom, you're in the next grade at school- or even graduated.”

“Even these old bones of mine, want to shoot through some of my painful moments like a two stage rocket shooting through the clouds, toward orbit. You know, it always amazes me how much training an astronaut has to do... several years with NASA, really packed. But that's on top of good grades in math courses through school, engineering college degrees, and even military aviation experience is a big help.”

Gramps held up his hands in a stop gesture toward the clubbers and said, “Now before you flip out, over all the schooling it takes to even qualify for astronaut training, you need to know about a little story, called a parable, that Jesus told His listeners about being faithful with the little that you already have, and God will give you more. To you and I that means that we need to study hard on what lessons we have in front of us, and not worry about all

the other stuff. God wants to grow smarter, but we need to take 'one day's lesson at a time. And look for His guidance. Understand? Don't worry about running to third base, when you're just now heading toward first base.”

“Now back to the NASA astronaut training – it includes bear hunting. Yeah, I know. It sounds nuts to me too, but it's true. There's no bears in space so why train to protect yourself from them? And why should an astronaut learn how to build a fire with sticks, grass, and leaves? The simple answer is because rockets and computers don't always do the things we think they should.”

Gramps shifted his position on the bench and continued, “I have a question for you all. How to the capsules that carry the astronauts, get back to earth?” Some of the answers were to fly back like the space shuttle and others said with parachutes. The next question was, “OK. If they come back with parachutes, where do they land?” Some said , in the ocean and others said on land in Asia.

“The electronic guidance systems in rockets and spacecraft aren't always dependable. They might fire the rockets wrong and cause the capsule to land in a forest, long before the rescue helicopters get there. They'll need that camping and hunting training they got to stay safe and healthy.”

Space Ray (Gramps) gestured with his hands for emphasis. “Remember when we decided the word PATHFINDERS would be a part of our club name? Well, having a safe God-honoring flight plan here on earth or headed for Mars, begins long before the launch countdown. It begins with being a good steward; not be wasteful with opportunities to learn how loving, good, and fully dependable God and His Bible are.

Back in Bible times, there was a shepherd boy that always depended on God's power and protection. God later made him the the most famous king of all. King David wrote,

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”
(Psalm 119:105)