

Students, Space, 'n Scripture

An Eduventure

Leader Guide

Book 1

by
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Introduction

ROCKETRY IN SCRIPTURE? Well, yes and no.

God's precious word – our Bible, doesn't mention rockets, hard drives, cell phones, cars, airplanes, or spaceships. Instead, God's word fills a higher purpose by giving us PRINCIPLES by which we can use all the gifts He has given us, in fun safe ways that honor Him and fulfill Christ's Great Commission:

== And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)

This Space Tweens eduventure series is based on scripture and its heaven-sent promise and guaranteed success in preparing every generation in 'all good works'. Specifically, 2nd Timothy 3:16, 17 tell us where scripture has come from, what it's about, how to use it, and the guaranteed results.

== All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may

be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. ==

Within that promise, the Space Tweens story series uses a rocketry flavored clubhouse of preteens, led by a silver-haired missionary from a quite different generation for several purposes:

- (1) to show God's Written Word to be as irreplaceable and timely in our technology driven world today, as it was when written. (as promised in 2nd Timothy 3:16, 17)
- (2) Show fun, non-technical ways to use rocketry facts and techniques to share one's faith and message, even by preschoolers, from backyards, basements, and jungle clearings. (as commanded in Matthew 28:19, 20)
- (3) To provide teaching tools that build upon the gender and generation diversities that scripture commands us to coexist in unity; as in our bodies of bone and blood, and our bodies of believers. (as directed in John 17)
- (4) Accent the service of our silver-haired mentors as their potential is so terribly under-used in this technology age. (as directed in Job 32:7)



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#1 – Launch!

The rocket's long shadow slowly crept across the Space Ray Pathfinder's Operations Bay. A first time visitor would call the OB (Operations Bay) just a vacant storeroom with very little furniture for the 8 preteen boys and 2 girls. Space Ray was the nickname of silver-haired Ray Timmons – himself a retired missile guidance systems technician and computer programmer. He'd be quick to tell you he much preferred 'Gramps' – especially by the club members.

The rocket was a full sized mighty Titan II Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, no longer in its beneath-ground launch silo, but now a monument in front of Mathers Rocket and Space Museum. Each time Ray's eyes traced the rocket's sleek lines from engines to its nosecone, pointing to the heavens, he sensed great pride in his long-ago efforts to align its guidance system to remain on the planned trajectory.

But it was nothing like the joy and thankfulness to God, he had for being allowed to spend his 'golden years' of retirement guiding the lives of these youth – some people would call them 'throw-away' youth. Gramps firmly believed in the large orange-lettered poster Nancy had painted for him that proclaimed, “GOD DON'T MAKE NO JUNK!”

Another poster displays a cutout picture of the Bible and then the words, “EQUALS GOD'S SPACE MANUAL”. You had to smile and imagine all the work Pete and Charley put into their crude replica of the International Space Station hanging from the ceiling. It was a collection of sticks, Styrofoam cups, clay, and pasteboard backing from writing tablets – for solar panels.

Pointing up at the ceiling space station was a radio telescope for communications, sitting on the box in the

corner. Because Jimmy didn't have any NASA funding or government grants, he built it starting with a dented salad bowl he found in Hanson's trash can. Only critical people would notice the coat hanger framework that held it all together.


No one knew for sure how Launch got his nickname. He was absolutely the laziest, sleepingest cat you ever laid eyes on. It might have been the time Benny stepped on his tail. Even without a countdown, Launch was half way to the space station – the ceiling one, in a flash. That launch didn't need a drop of rocket fuel.

The most valued object in the OB was the 1 meter (true scientists use metric.) rocket that just got its detailed painting last week. Thanks to Bishop's leftover white house paint, she was a monument to the efforts of the clubbers. Bonnie did most of the lettering, but Gramps made sure every clubber had a hand in painting the little Cross not far from the section that housed the inertial guidance systems... that is, if the rocket wasn't actually constructed from paper towel tubes.

Every Saturday afternoon club meeting started the same. Gramps would lead everyone in prayer, asking God to guide each clubber to open his/her heart a little farther and fuel up on His promises, and purpose for them. A healthy dose of praise was always included. After the amen, Gramps would ask one of the clubbers to state the club's purpose. The response was always the same, “To learn how to always honor God in everything I do and think, and to see that 'all good works' certainly includes missions and rocketry.” Often they'd point to the wall poster that displayed the words from 2 Timothy 3:16 and 17. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

Since this was cleanup day, all the clubbers swept and dusted as best as they could. Launch headed out the door and to a safe place for cats, under the trash dumpster. When cleanup was finished, Gramps taught a neat lesson from the Bible, on how to continue trusting in God, even though He doesn't give you what you need, right on the spot. It was something about DO WAIT – DON'T WORRY – GOD GUIDES.

... Next BICYCLE ROCKETRY. ~ ~ ~

Note: 1 meter = about 39 inches 

#2 – Rocket Wheels

A ROCKET WITH WHEELS AND HANDLE BARS!” It was the repeated phrase from several of the preteen clubbers, as they pointed at the wall poster Space Ray “Gramps” had posted earlier in the week. The bold lettering simply stated, “BICYCLE ROCKETRY”.

Jake, the quietest of the clubbers, sat motionless, staring at a blank portion of the wall. It was as though his thinking was in another galaxy; a land where people lived without fear, without empty tummies that moan to be filled, without grownups that constantly argue, and evil people who do ugly unGodly things to each other. Jake had no idea what kind of rocket that Gramps was about to tell them about – with wheels or whatever, but the quiet preteen wished it could take him to that other galaxy, to a planet called HUG.

Not many people knew this, but almost every Saturday, before the other clubbers arrived, Jake entered the OB (Space Ray Pathfinders Operations Bay) and made sure no one was watching him. He'd silently walk to his favorite wall poster

and softly slowly move his hand across its words. Somehow he wanted the truths of the words to take root in his heart – a heart that needed promise, purpose, and a big dose of lasting peace. The words on the poster stated, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27).

Gramps carried the bicycle wheel in one hand beside him as he walked the fairly short path to the old store room near the Mathers Rocket and Space Museum and the tall proud Titan II ICBM. The fervent prayer on his lips was begging God to give him the words, the heart to look past the faults of the preteens he was about to spend this Saturday and all the other club times with. The times he'd do rocket repair work with the precision of a surgeon, was nothing like his desire to do his best – with God's guiding hand.

Gramps entered the OB and placed the bike wheel on the table at the front of the benches the clubbers sat on. Like a space shuttle locking onto the International Space Station, Gramps eyes met the eyes of each clubber, with something that some might call a visual hug, of some sort. It was certainly more than one of Star Trek Spock's mind meld.

The club time was opened with prayer, as always, and then the club's purpose was stated. The silver-haired Pathfinders leader announced, “I need two volunteers.” 'Course everyone shot to their feet, waving a hand, to be chosen. Two were invited forward and asked to hold the bike wheel, by its axle, between them.

The lesson began, “Clubbers. What would happen if Nancy was to let go of her side of the axle?” The responses were all correct. The wheel would fall on Benny's foot or next to him. Gramps told Nancy and Benny to hold onto each end of the axle and keep their fingers and clothing away from the spokes. Space Ray began spinning the wheel pretty fast and

then told Nancy to carefully, slowly let go of her end of the axle.

To everyone's amazement, the spinning wheel stayed right in place, only being held by Benny's side of the axle. Before the wheel slowed its spinning very much, Nancy was told to take hold of her end again. The experiment was repeated.

“Guys. This bike wheel demonstration shows us how a gyroscope works. A spinning wheel wants to keep right on spinning right where it is. Because of this, a gyro is the main part of a rocket's guidance system. No rocket could leave the earth without one, and stay on its flight path very long.”

“ Each of you clubbers and me too, are like rockets... we need to have a path to follow and something to keep us moving straight and true to that path. I have a question. The rocket has a gyro to keep it on its path. What do you and I have to keep us going straight and true, and on the path we should be on?” Everyone wanted to answer, but it was Bobby that picked up a picture of a Bible and laid it on the table next to Gramps.

Jake decided in his heart, that he'd take a gyro and the Bible to travel to his planet HUG. ☼

#3 – Star Steps

Rocket motors is something I love to talk about,” were the beginning words of Gramps just after the opening prayer was finished. All the preteen boys and girls eyes lit up to catch every word that followed. “The biggest engines on what's called the first stage are the biggest and are used for just long enough to get the rocket most of the way up through our atmosphere. The second stage engine is designed

to work better where there is much less air to burn. That second stage engine has the job of speeding up the rocket faster than 20,000 miles per hour. If it doesn't do that, the rocket won't escape the gravitation of the Earth and it will fall back to the ground. The rocket would have no chance to head for the stars, or even any planets.”

The Space Ray Pathfinders clubbers were on the edge of their seats... actually on the edge of the hard benches they sat on. The silver-haired Gramps continued his lesson. “But I want this afternoon to tell you about a rocket motor small enough to hold in your hand. It's odd in how it works. This little motor works with electricity. Now an electric fan works by turning the electricity on and leaving it on, till we don't need the fan anymore. And we know that fan motor and blades go around and around and around.”

“But watch this. I'm going to move this little block of wood by just tapping it with my finger. Jake, will this block of wood get moved farther tapping it three times or six times?” Jake said, “Well, Gramps, I guess it would go twice as far tapping it six times, than the three times.” Gramps and most of the clubbers applauded Jake's correct answer.

Gramps continued the lesson with, “So this odd little motor that only runs on little taps or pulses of electricity, knows how far to turn by counting the number of pulses of electricity it gets. You could say it gets its job done in little amounts... sort of little by little. This small but very important 'little by little' electric motor is called a STEPPER Motor, since it moves in little steps and makes it possible to get a rocket launched toward the stars. Those little stepper motors are used in computer disk drives, computer printers, and many other things.”

The lesson continues. “The reasons we should all learn about the super importance of the stepper motor actions is for two reasons. First, the motor is not seen by hardly anyone. It

doesn't make a lot of noise and flash like the launch engines burning all that fuel in seconds, but the little motor is just as important in keeping the rocket's computers storing data and providing commands to the big launch motors. The other reason is they move little by little; step by step.”

The clubbers asked Gramps more about the little stepper motors, and how important they were, to every launch and space stations.

The silver-haired club leader's heart was in maximum thrust asking God for the words yet to be said to the young souls sitting in front of him, hungry for truth and hope.

“Now the thing you and I need to learn is how God most often answers our prayers and meets our needs. It so happens, He does this little by little – according to His schedule, not ours.”

“In the Bible the phrase is not exactly like our 'little by little'. The Bible phrase is 'little and little'. The verses* tell us how God protects and provides for His people. And many other Bible verses remind us that you and I are supposed to lovingly obey His commands, step by step... little by little.” Gramps looked into the eyes of each of his preteen listeners and with the most heartfelt tones said, “God doesn't want loud flashy young people to tell Him they love Him. He wants us with a quiet steady step by step heart to share His love and plan with others around us.”

“Also, in the same way the little stepper motors help computers remember important facts and commands, we need to learn God's word and His will for our lives, little by little; verse by verse. Clubbers, I'll soon be 73 years old and the most important verse to learn and share is in John 3:16. It says, *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'*”

Exodus 23:29, 30; Deuteronomy 7:22 ☒

#4 Moon Missionary

This promised to be a real super Saturday club meeting of the Space Ray Pathfinders. All the preteen clubbers gathered around their silver-haired leader and ace story teller. No one said a word. Gramps leaned forward on his wooden box and looked intently into the eyes of each of the youth, as he began telling a story he had written about another story teller named Zeb. Gramps cautioned the clubbers “Now after I tell you my story, I’m gonna ask you some questions, so remember the facts of the story, OK?” The story begins...

The far-off planet Earth looked to Mark like a giant living, breathing, marble, as he awoke to the first glimpse out his moon habitat bedroom window. Just as he was sliding his ten-year-old body out of bed, the low air pressure alarm sounded and almost scared him. The room lighting immediately switched to the pink-colored glow of emergency mode.

It didn’t take much memory to make sure that all the equipment and utilities were turned off. Jumping into his sweats like a fireman, Mark headed out the door. All his emergency drill practices had taught him to follow the green tape trail down the hallways – and to be careful to walk fast, but not run.

Mark was born on the International Space Station orbiting the Earth, and at the age of eight, moved with his missionary parents to Moon Base #3, near Hilbert Crater. Mark’s dad was a Christian missionary, in training for a possible church planting assignment on the Mars colony that was still in the planning stage. He also worked as a technician on the Primary Laser Survey Team.

Moon base #3 was home to only four other young


people. As though part of some programmed response, all the children gathered around silver-haired Zeb in Safety Pod #14 until the emergency was over. Zeb was loved for all his juicy long-ago and far-away stories he told his young listeners about Earth. His stories were packed with excitement and intrigue his long memory would weave for the youth. First, Zeb led his young “team” in prayer for the safety of their parents and the workers in responding to the air pressure emergency. Then he sort of apologized to the 5 boys and girls for having to hold their church services in the Farming Pod among all the plants and things, instead of in a beautiful Chapel Pod designed just for worshiping God. With every eye on him, he began telling about the Croton Church Kids. The silver-haired story teller’s little audience squeezed in closer, not wanting to miss a word.

He told them that many years ago, on Earth, in a small town called Croton, children attended church with their parents in a broken-down building that didn’t have the fine air conditioning and lighting like here on Moon Base #3. The building had only one room with no insulation in the walls. During the cold Earth winters, the mothers had to leave on their coats and wrap blankets around their feet to stay reasonably warm. The restroom was in a separate little building outside, with nowhere to wash hands. Zeb painted a word picture of the time he and a friend had to climb through one of the church’s back windows because the front door lock refused to open. He also explained what honey bees, mice, and a few other Earth animals were, as he told of the uninvited visitors to the church services that scared the ladies.

Gramps ended his story for the Pathfinder clubbers with, “OK. How many of you think you remember the story about Zeb and his Moon Base friends pretty well?” Most did very well.

Space Ray began the lesson with, “Rockets and

satellites can't do much of anything without the computers that control them. And every one of those computers can't function without memory – actually two kinds of memory. Those two kinds are short term memory, called RAM and long term memory the disk drives provide. What were the two kinds of memory used in my Zeb story?”

“These two kinds of memory are super important and that's why God gave us both kinds in the computer between our ears. Try hard each day to use both kinds in praising God and learning His promises in the Bible – God's Rocket Manual.” 

#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)



#6 – Help Me!

Something was wrong, and it needed to be dealt with right away. Gramps had begun this week's rocket flavored lesson to the 10 or so preteen boys and girls. Each member of the SPACE TWEENS CLUB was like a

cherished member of his own family. When any of the youth turned very sad and possibly tears were on the way, it was time to break out the red handkerchief.

Every clubber knew that when their silver-haired leader put that red handkerchief part way into his shirt pocket, it meant, “stay away, don't interrupt, I'm busy, (and most of all,) pray that I use the right words with a Godly heart.”

As Gramps had all the clubbers begin their MARS MATTERS project at one end of the Operations Bay, he noticed Bonnie's face had turned very sad and took immediate action. Quietly, Gramps invited Bonnie to follow him to a quiet corner of the OB club room where there were two chairs, near a well-used blackboard. By the time they both sat in the chairs, Gramps had put his red handkerchief part way into his pocket. That red flag silently gave its warning to the other clubbers that snuck a peek in that direction.

Gramps softly spoke to Bonnie, “Bonnie, I have to tell you that right now my heart hurts. It hurts because I think your heart is hurting now too. It'll soften my hurting heart if you'll give me some idea why you are sad. Will you tell me, if I promise to keep it a secret? I know what. Lets tell Jesus we're both hurting and we want to tell Him why, and what we should do.” The silver-haired club leader led them both in prayer.

“Well, Gramps. I'm no good to nobody.” “Well Bonnie. That's a pretty powerful statement. I know you did most of the lettering on the side of our club rocket, so why do you feel you're no good?” “Gramps, mama always told me since I didn't work very hard in school, I would be no good to nobody. And then all your stories and lessons seemed to be about man astronauts... well, I'm a girl and NASA doesn't want any girl training to be an astronaut – it must be a BOYS ONLY thing. See, Gramps? I'm no good to nobody.” The heart cries from Gramps to Heaven's throne of grace

screamed HELP ME! His first thought was to tell Bonnie, “I’ve been there – done that.” There were those many weeks that he felt God had no more use for him and his worn out body, with shaky fingers and shaky memory. There were those tears hidden by bedtime covers that spelled out, “I’m used up, worn out, no good to nobody.”

“Bonnie. God made man and put him in the garden of Eden. But God decided the man needed help. So God made a woman for Adam. Bonnie, the Bible says the woman was to be a HELPMEEET to Adam.” Gramps wrote the word HELPMEEET on the blackboard. Then he erased the ET on the end. Bonnie, I like to think that Eve was an answer to Adam’s unspoken request, HELP ME. But here’s the really cool thing about a helpmeet person. They are able to do things well that you’re not so good at. I guess it’s like two pieces of a puzzle that fit together helping the other – they are different and neither one is better than the other.”

“I gotta tell you, Bonnie, there are women astronauts, and really good ones. One I know of, was even the Commander of the International Space Station. Oh! the little rockets on the side of a missile that keep it on path... well the very best ones were designed by Yvonne Brill. I think it’s so neat that whenever a space capsule lands here on Earth or have landed on Mars, the high speed parachutes were designed, by... you guessed it, a girl. The woman parachute designer’s name is Anita Sengupta. God knows who to go to, when He needs a real helpmeet to complete the team of humans designed to honor Him and apply all His heaven-sent gifts to us.”

The clubbers saw Gramps pull out his red handkerchief and blot a tear on Bonnie’s face.

Help meets are good with red warning flags and touching the hearts of others with God’s love and comfort. Want to read a true love story, you’ll never forget? Read the

Bible book of Ruth.

Want to see how one woman, in the face terrible danger, saved the lives of a whole nation of men, women, and children? Read the Bible book of Esther. ☼

#7 – Moon Walker

The OB was electric with the enthusiasm of the teens. Gramps (a.k.a. Space Ray) had hung up magazine pictures of space rovers all along the Operations Bay wall that included the two cracked windows. It was tough for the teens to stay in their seats during the usual club opening moments. The opening prayer barely ended before all the teens began asking each other if this was going to be the absolute best lesson they've had so far.

Gramps walked to the first picture in the row and pointed to it with his hand-carved cane. He said, “This is Moonwalker, that sprang to life on the lunar surface in 1970. The Russians were the first to put a rover on any celestial body besides Earth. As you can see it's about 7 feet long with 8 wheels that carried only electronic equipment. It was guided by remote control from Earth.”

“In the next two years, America put 3 different 4 wheeled lunar cars on the moon that carried two astronauts and their equipment. We all called them Moon Buggies,” Gramps said with a grin. “All of these vehicles are called Rovers because they travel on the surface wherever they land.”

Gramps moved past a cracked window and pointed at the next picture in his Rover Gallery. He continued his lesson with, “Now we'll switch to the Mars Rovers – which are all American. The first was the Pathfinder's Sojourner in 1997.

The next two were the twins, Spirit and Opportunity in 2004. The Spirit got stuck in the sand and died. The Opportunity is still functioning, long beyond its designed lifespan. What's neat is they landed on Mars just like a bouncing ball. When they stopped rolling, they opened up just like God designed a flower to open.”

“And then in 2012 we sent the big boy – the Curiosity. It landed by a crane lowering it gently to the surface of Mars.” With his cane, Gramps motioned toward a picture he had covered up, and said, “I've saved the best for last. But before that, let's have some questions and maybe some answers – if we know them.”

The next 10 minutes or so were full of excited teen questions and a few answers that surely generated more questions.

“Now clubbers, before I uncover this last authentic lunar rover photograph, I want to say this photo means a great deal to me. First is because one of my best friends sent it to me, knowing how much the photo says about exploring heavenly bodies – whether moons, asteroids, or planets. Now I want you all to put on your detective hats and tell me what are some of the things this lunar rover photo says to you.” He uncovered his prize picture.

Nancy raised her hand, and said, “Gramps. That lunar sky, if you want to call it that, is so black. To me it looks so empty, so cold, and even gives me lonely chills. I'd miss our blue sky with fleecy clouds in a minute.”

Jake's comment was, “I look at that flag stuck in the ground with no atmosphere, no wind, nothing to make it wave and attract anyone's attention.”

Bonnie said, “I stare at the lunar lander in the middle of the picture. It looks so fragile. It sits there quietly, a reminder it is the only way home, with no backup or plan B.”

And then Gramps spoke. “Clubbers, what grabs my

attention the most, are the tracks. The rover wheel tracks that curve around here and there. And even more are the tracks of humans – the footprints of the astronauts.”

The club's silver-haired leader looked into the eyes of each of the teens as the tone of his voice became more serious and heartfelt. “The reason this rover picture from my friend means so much to me is that I picture in my mind the tracks, the steps I leave behind and where they go. I know people are watching me, not 'cuz I'm special or anything, but my heart just breaks when I think of moments I make stupid selfish decisions that lead me into trouble. Those decisions lead me into trouble and also those that are following in my tracks.”

“And I can even imagine myself on the moon all by myself, and making a stupid decision. I think that no one else will know, but I believe somehow it brings tears to the Lord, in spite of all that He has provided for me. He's the only way I have to reach my Heavenly home, why would I shame or hurt Him? ☺

#8 – Killer Pocket

Another exciting story from Gramps to the club members:

I'm trapped! I'm in a cage and can't get out! Lois sat in front of her machine in high school sewing class. For two weeks, she and her class were learning to sew pockets on pants, dresses, and shirts. They learned to use all types of thread and material and which was best for what kinds of uses. But she thought she would go mad.

Lois ached within herself to do something important. Though her hands would position the material, and carefully guide it through the sewing machine, she felt so useless, so insignificant. Her mind would continually place her in

important jobs like writing speeches for famous people, helping a scientist invent a new medicine, or create a gown to be worn by some movie star.

But the last couple nights were worse yet. After bedtime prayer she had cried, hoping to get some relief from the feelings of “I’m a nobody that can sew pockets.”

On Saturday, at her mom’s request, Lois took her younger brother Timmy to the science museum to see some new exhibits he needed to look at for a school report. The most popular exhibit was a person wearing one of the actual space suits worn on one of Apollo moon landings. His helper explained the purpose of all the many hoses, fixtures, and valves to the children as Lois stood back and watched all the attention.

The children got down on their knees to better see something the helper was describing about the suit that was below the backpack. Lois moved in closer to listen.

The helper said, “See that little pocket? It isn’t used for anything anymore, but it is still attached to every new suit that is made. And children, know what? If that pocket isn’t sewn on with the greatest of care, the suit will loose pressure during a space walk and kill the astronaut. That astronaut’s life depends on the best efforts of someone with a sewing machine he or she has never seen, or the work that was done.”

Lois pulled out a handkerchief and headed for a dark corner before anyone saw her tears. In sewing class could she ever have imagined that a pocket could save a life?

Two weeks later, the 'do-your-best-at-what-you-do' adage was made even more penetrating when Lois’ youth pastor shared a message from Matthew 25. The message included the parable of the talents. The weight in Lois’ heart was lifted when she heard the pastor read, “thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” Two verses later

the same statement was made to another faithful steward. Even at that moment she thanked God for the comfort that comes from knowing she is saved and from scripture showing us how we can have joy.

Gramps then told the Space Ray Pathfinders clubbers listening to his story, “Our wonderful Bible even guides us in the ways we should act in our families and those people we serve. The Bible says that whatsoever we do, we should do it with our whole heart, as unto the Lord.*

The clubbers were also reminded again, as they so often are, that others are watching us, many times when we don't even know they are. Our words and actions are always lessons to others, whether they are good or bad. Those lessons can be how to make or fix things, but also our values we put in things. We can fulfill responsibilities to God with a grumbling attitude that can be destructive lessons to others than can never be erased.

Just after bedtime prayer that night, Lois pictured herself sewing a pocket on the robe of her Savior, Jesus Christ. How important that would be. Serving God with her talents. But she knew the job was not finished. In this picture, Lois took her heart and placed it in the pocket of the Lord's robe.

Where have you placed your heart for safe keeping?

Will your sewing machine make pockets?

*Colossians 3:23, 24 paraphrased. ☒

#9 – Man Cleaners

One wrong step and ear-splitting sirens would go off. We're talking dirt here. And I don't mean filthy words, mud mountains, or clay clods – but particles of dust smaller than you can see without a powerful

magnifying glass.” With that, the silver-haired leader of the Space Ray Pathfinders club began his lesson shortly after the all-important opening prayer.

“Hmmm, Bonnie, could you come up and help me, please?” he motioned to her hold a small hand-held vacuum cleaner. “I’ve charged up the battery so this little vac should make some racket. Bonnie, turn on the vac and then turn it off. Then do that a couple times.” The powerful hand vacuum cleaner jerked a little, every time it was turned on.

“OK, you can take your seat, thank you Bonnie,” were his words as the teen handed Gramps the cleaner. He held the vacuum cleaner up in front of him so all the teens could get a good look at the little noisy beauty. His voice changed to a more serious tone as he said, “Now I want each of you to put your imagination cap on. I want each of you to imagine you had somehow shrunk yourself down to fit inside this vacuum cleaner.”

Toward the back of the group of a dozen or so teens, Jimmy whispered to Jake, “Oh here we go again. Gramps has slipped into one of those senior moments where his mind is on another world.” Jake agreed with a smile.

I know it sounds weird, but stick with me, I’m not off in Weirdsville. This is not one of my dreams. In a way, I’ve actually done this.” He held up both hands to the clubbers in a stop gesture, and a “Let me explain,” request.

“Clubbers. Shortly after I was hired to the guidance systems repair and calibration team of the mighty Titan Ballistic missile, I was taken to a locker room. In the room I was directed to put on white plastic coveralls, booties over my shoes, and a sort-of shower cap to cover all my hair. I followed two other people through a door that boldly stated, “MAN CLEANER, ENTER HERE.”

With a bit of a smile, Gramps said it struck him funny that they were going into a man cleaner, and one of the others

ahead of him was a lady with hair trimmed fairly short.

Everyone, including the team leader, were in this very small room that had a floor like a fire escape. The leader gave certain instructions and comments about what to expect – the noise, and all. The small room with the fire escape

floor, did exactly what its name implied. The wall switch was turned on. It was a vacuum cleaner so powerful, you thought it would suck your coveralls off. According to instructions, each of the team slowly moved around and gently rubbing their coveralls, booties, and head bonnet.

After the three minute cleaning process was done, the blowers shut off. Next the electronic door lock to the gyroscope assembly room clicked and the team walked into the room filled with devices so precision that a speck of dust too small for humans to see, would destroy them.

With eye contact that captured the attention of each clubber, Gramps something that happened later that day.

“Clubbers, after supper that evening, I thought about all the amazing wonderful things I'd seen and experienced that day. Something that stuck in my mind was that when we reentered the locker room and removed our booties, bonnet, and coveralls, I thought about each of us being just as 'soiled' as we were before we put those things on. The man-cleaner only cleaned our outside.”

“As I reached for my Bible, I realized the truths and promises in it, are the only ones that are truly and thoroughly a man-cleaner. The sinless shed blood of the Lord Jesus is the only way to have our hearts – all of us, cleaned and fit for the purity and perfection of Heaven.”

“And when we ask the Lord to save us and wash away all our sins, we must also make Him – and Him alone, the Lord of our lives. We must allow Him in every room of our heart, mind, and body. Then daily, we must feed on His word, the Bible to continually guard against the dirt of this world

entering in.”

We'll talk more about His cleansing and perfecting us, next time. ☺

#10 – The Ultimate Clock

TITAN-II MISSILES RULE!” were the bright colored words on Gramps' favorite ball cap. Sprouts of silver hair poked out from around his cap. To the 10 or 12 preteen members of the Space club, that cap worn by their beloved leader, had a very special meaning; something BIG is coming up. That message was surely true today.

As Gramps opened this Saturday's meeting with prayer, everyone removed their caps and bowed their heads. The clubbers had learned that great fun and joy always and only begins with heartfelt prayer and praise to our Lord Jesus. Just a few announcements were made before Ray (that's Gramps) began passing around magazine pictures of all sorts of clocks.

As the clock pictures were passed around, He asked, “Where would we be without clocks? Well, to start off with, we wouldn't be able to have these fun club meetings, and that Titan ICBM monument in front of the Mathers Air & Space Museum wouldn't be able to get off the ground or reach it's target.”

“Where is the ultimate clock and who manufactured it?” Some mentioned Big Ben and another thought it was kept on the President's desk in the White House.

Gramps briskly rubbed his hands together and repositioned his special ball cap. Every clubber was already sitting on the edge of their seats with anticipation of what was about to happen. “I'm so excited,” he said. “We're going to be

studying the absolute ultimate clock that is so big and powerful, it wouldn't fit on this Earth. God put it in outer space. It has no battery, never needs winding, and is used by every person on the earth.” And with a grin he said, “Even animals and plants use that clock too! Is that cool or what?”

All the clubbers, except the two newest members, were not surprised, when the shaky hands of silver-haired Gramps slid his always-open Bible over in front of him and quickly moved to its beginning pages. He looked at each clubber to make sure they were all paying attention, and then read, “*And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.*”

The expression of Gramps as he made eye contact with the preteens, and said, “OK. So you think it says – well, God made the sun, moon, and stars – no big deal. But I'm here to tell you that anyone who thinks that's no big deal, is bad wrong!” Gramps had one the older clubbers write out the scripture words on the old blackboard as everyone watched.

When the writing was finished and Jerry took his seat, Gramps said, “look carefully at the words. God's word doesn't say 'the two lights SHINED'. God tells us specifically that those lights RULE. But then notice it doesn't say the stars ruled, just those two lights that rule the day and night.”

“Over the next six weeks or so, we're going to see in what ways these two lights RULE our day and night. We'll see that not only did God create them by speaking them into existence, but He still controls them, as no one else can.

“We'll be filling that whole wall over there, with neat posters and pictures that explain how God's sun and moon rule,” Gramps said.

With a warm smile, Gramps continued. “I like to think of the beautiful sunrise, prettier than any person could paint, says to me from God, 'Good mornin Gramps. I've prepared another wonderful day for you to enjoy, telling others about

my unending love, and sharing my Bible promises of peace and provision, that only I can provide.”

“And then in the sunset God says to me, 'See I showed you today that I love you deeper than the oceans. Remember that I cherish hearing your 'I love you's from your lips too.'”



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Space Tweens

Book 2

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