

# Greyland and the Pink Baby

Posted originally by EllenK member Rotation.org

**This is a story written by our pastor Wes Magruder. We used it in our "Hanging of the Green" service to illustrate why we use certain colors at Christmas. I thought it might be used in a storytelling workshop also.**

## Story

This is the story of a land which had no color.  
A country called **Greyland**.

In **Greyland**, everything was a dull **grey**.  
The sky was always **grey** with a light rain.  
The ground was scattered with **grey** rocks.  
All the cars were **grey**.  
All dogs and cats were **grey**.  
The people of **Greyland** had **grey** faces –  
They didn't frown much, but they didn't smile either.

There was only one holiday during the year, a joyless occasion called **Stand Up Straight Day**.  
On that day, everyone in **Greyland** made sure they stood up a little straighter than usual because it was good for them.  
Not real exciting, huh?

But one day, the inhabitants of **Greyland** were shocked to discover an unusual sight in the **Greyland Memorial Hospital**.

A little **boy** was born there.  
A strange and unusual little **boy**.  
He was cute and cuddly ... but he wasn't **grey**!  
He was **pink**!  
A **pink** baby **boy**! Who would ever have thought such a thing could happen?!

His parents were ashamed.  
They tried to cover up his **pink** with **grey** blankets and **grey** diapers, but people could tell that he was **pink**. Finally, his parents were so embarrassed by their **pink** baby that they moved away from **Greyland**. And nobody ever saw him again!

Nobody knew where the **pink** baby went. There were rumors that he moved across the great ocean. There were rumors that he never grew up. But nobody knew what happened to the **pink** baby.

One day, a little **grey boy**, about the age of six started to annoy his parents and teachers by refusing to participate in **Stand Up Straight Day**.

His parents woke him up in the morning and said, “Get up quickly! It’s time for **Stand Up Straight Day!** Let’s see how straight you can stand today!”

The **boy** said, “I don’t want to stand up straight. That’s a terrible reason to have a celebration.”

His mother answered him, “Do you have a better idea for a holiday?”

The **boy** sighed and said, “No, I guess not.” And he stomped his feet and stood up straight. But that night, before he went to sleep, he prayed a special prayer that God might give the people of **Greyland** a new holiday. In fact, he prayed it every night for several weeks.

One day, while he was walking to school through the Great **Grey** Forest, he saw something from a distance that caught his eye. A beautiful, colorful, **green** tree. He’d never seen a tree like this before. In fact, he’d never seen **green** in his life before!

Just then, an **old man** in a big **grey** robe and **grey** beard walked up and said to him, “This is the color **green**.”

“It’s beautiful,” said the **boy**. “But what does it do?”

The **old man** laughed. “It doesn’t do anything. But it means something very important. **Green** is the color that these trees are supposed to be. Trees aren’t supposed to be **grey**, you know!”

“They aren’t?!” said the **boy**.

“No, **green** is the color of living things, of growth and life and being happy. You’ve never seen **green** before?”

The **boy** shook his head.

“I’m sorry, little **boy**,” said the **old man**. “One day, all the trees in **Greyland** will be **green** again, like they’re supposed to be. Until then, here’s an ever**green** branch for you – to remember what it will be like someday.”

The **boy** took the branch, then said, “But when? How long will we have to wait?!”

But the stranger was gone. The **boy** was left holding a strange **green** branch.

Well, the **boy** went home and put his **green** branch on his bookshelf. He was very proud of it. And from that day on, he began to hope and pray that he would discover other colors.

Every once in a while, he’d wander in the forest looking for other colors. And one day, he was rewarded by a splash of bright color in a flower. When he drew close, he saw a star-shaped flower in a brilliant shade of ... what?

“That’s red, my **boy**,” said the **old man** in robe and beard who had appeared from nowhere. “That’s my personal favorite.”

“Red,” said the **boy**. “Are all flowers supposed to be red?”

The **old man** laughed. “Flowers are all sorts of colors, but red ones are especially pretty. This flower is called a poinsettia. Poinsettias tell an important story about the birth of a baby who came to change the world.”

The **boy** opened his eyes wide. “Are you talking about the **pink** baby?”

The **old man** laughed. “Yes, the baby who was born **pink** came to bring a whole bunch of colors to **Greyland**. Red is one of those colors. Poinsettias remind us that the **pink** baby grew up and became an adult, and then died.”

“The **pink** baby died?”

“Yes, I’m afraid so,” said the **old man**. “Did you know that when he died, he bled, and the color of blood is red?”

The **boy** gasped. “I didn’t know that. But isn’t that terrible? He wasn’t able to bring color to **Greyland**.”

“Oh yes, he did,” said the stranger. “He did bring color to **Greyland**. But not everybody can see it – it takes special eyes!”

“Special eyes?” said the **boy**. He bent down to pick up the poinsettia, but when he stood up, the **old man** was gone – again!!

When the **boy** went home, he put the red flower beside the **green** branch on his shelf. He began to think about what the stranger had told him in the forest. He began to wonder if there was even more color in **Greyland** than he realized.

He began to look at things more carefully. Every once in a while, he did see **green** leaves on the trees. Every once in a while, he saw **red** petals on the flowers.

Once he even saw a color in the sky ... the stars that shone above **Greyland** were usually, well, **grey** and dull. But one evening, he saw a star that was so shiny, it made his eyes hurt. And it was a different color.

As he stood in his bedroom window looking at it, he saw the **old man** in the long robe and beard again.

“What color is that?”

“Why, that’s gold! Isn’t it dazzling? Isn’t it amazing? That’s the color of the most precious stones and jewels in the world. It’s the color of kings and queens, of palaces and castles. And it’s the color of stars.”

The **boy** twisted up his nose. “Stars are supposed to be **gold**?”

“Yes,” said the **old man**. “But the star you see up there is special. It’s just like the star that shone above the place where the **pink** baby was born. It let everyone know for miles around that a special baby had been born – only not everyone took the time to look up into the sky to see it!”

“I’m beginning to understand,” said the **boy**. “You really have to look for the colors in order to see them. If you don’t take the time to really look, you might miss them. I’m starting to see all sorts of colors now.”

The **old man** smiled. “You’re getting the hang of it, but you still don’t know the true secret behind the colors of **Greyland**. I’ll visit you again soon, but until then, here’s some **gold** dust.”

He waved his arm high in the sky, grabbed some of the stars and pulled them down into his hand. Then he dropped **gold** dust into the **boy**’s outstretched palms.

“Goodbye,” he called as he disappeared.

After a few more months, it was time for **Stand Up Straight Day** again in **Greyland**. The **boy** had lost all interest in the holiday. After all, he spent all his time looking for color in his world. He knew that he was the only kid who could see color.

This morning when he woke up, he looked at the **green** tree branch, **red** flower and **gold** dust sitting on his bookshelf and wondered when the whole of **Greyland** would be colorful. He wondered what the **pink** baby had to do with it all.

His mom ran into the room excitedly. “Wake up! Wake up! Something amazing has happened outside!”

The **boy** ran to his window quickly, and saw that the entire village was covered in snow. He’d never seen snow before, he’d only read about it in books. But this had to be snow! And the color of snow had to be **WHITE**!

He ran outside and soon all the village children had joined him in playing outdoors, making snowmen and snow angels.

He laughed and played all day long with his friends. As the long afternoon started to get dark, he saw the **old man** standing and watching at the edge of the forest. He ran over to the **old man** and said, “This is **white**, isn’t it?”

The **old man** chuckled. “Yes, it is. This snow means that the world has been wiped clean of **grey**; from now on, **Greyland** will be full of color.”

“Who did this?” said the **boy**.

*“Why, the **pink** baby, of course.”*

*“I thought you said that he had died?!”*

*“He did, but he came back to life. And when he did, he made everything good as new. That’s the secret about the **pink** baby – he’ll always be with you ... In fact, I’ve never been away.”*

*The **boy** gulped loudly and looked a little more closely at the **old man** ... and saw that his cheeks were **pink**!*

“But you ...!!”

The **old man** laughed and ran back into the forest.

A week later, when the snow melted, **Greyland** was suddenly full of color. The trees turned **green**, the flowers turned **yellow**, **blue** and **purple**, the houses turned **red** and **brown**. Suddenly, every baby born in **Greyland Hospital** was born a different color – **white**, **red**, **black**, **brown**.

And as for **Stand Up Straight Day**, you know they had to change that!

They have a new holiday

In which they celebrate a special birth

And all the colors that the **pink** baby brought to their world.

What do you think they call it?

Of course ... CHRISTMAS!!

Reply by Karen-- member

**Any suggestions for a "take home" project to go along with this story?**

Can anyone think of a way to do a similar lesson with this wonderful story? I know we could do the color beads, and make a small bracelet, but we've done that several times in our church already. I'm wondering if someone could suggest any other ideas. By the way, our Christmas rotation this year is Shepherds & Angels. I'm not sure I will be able to use the Greyland story for Christmas, but **I think we could use it at Easter!** Don't know if that helps other's creative ideas or not!

Thanks, Karen

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Reply by Zola -- member

**Art: Beaded Bracelets Using Story Colors**

What a wonderful story Greyland found above! I think I will use it in December for one of our preschool's sanctuary times along with the bracelet idea (use color beads to match story and make a small bracelet), since many of the children are unchurched and probably haven't done that activity before. This story would be great for adults, too.

**Colors found in story are:** Grey, Pink, Green, Red, Gold, White, Black, Brown, Yellow, Blue and Purple.

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Denise Roth-Ludtke -- member

**Art: Make a Layered Book**

I think we are going to make a "layered" book. It is not complete in thought and theory yet, but the idea is a take the layered book concept.

- 1) Basically the first page starts out with black and white.
- 2) The kids then make a grey page that shows a bit of the black and white.
- 3) The next page introducing the pink color etc. etc.
- 4) Another idea we are toying with is to have the kids add a page of colored transparencies to make up the book.
- 5) The illustrations and words will be ran off on cardstock, then the kids will add a layer of colored transparency to cover one scene of the page.
- 6) On the pink page they would trace and cut out the baby, attach it as a flap and add it to their book.

Does that make sense? Denise

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Linda in Flourtown – member

### **Game: Taxicab**

We used this story during a Birthday Party for Jesus held at the conclusion of our "Messiah" unit. We adapted the game "Taxicab" to use with the story. In the game each player receives a **key word** from the story and the story is then read aloud. As the word is mentioned in the story the player with that word gets up, turns around and is seated again. At the mention of **Stand Up Straight Day all players get up and rush to another place**. You can have one less place than number of players so that one person is always standing and on the lookout for an empty spot. We selected key words like grey, pink, green, red, old man, boy, etc. which are used fairly frequently in the story.