

Introduction

In this edition of Educare, we bring to you a children's story complete with illustrations, written by a teacher of TCKs. This engaging tale gets right to the heart of TCK-ness, in a way that will be understood by children, whether or not they are TCKs themselves. It will also help adults to appreciate the impact of moving cultures – parents, family and friends, churches, and all who seek to support TCKs.

Your stories

The global effects of Covid 19 are being felt in every part of the world where our families are living. We would like to give an opportunity for you to share your stories, as a means of informing and encouraging one another. If you have a testimony or a story that you would like to share, please get in touch. Perhaps your experience and advice would help someone else. Email us at stevegillbryant@gmail.com

Gill Bryant

Go to the next page for the story of Theo.....

Theo the chameleon

In a green place, under a green tree, in a green garden lived a chameleon. His name was Theo Chris King. He lived there with his green family. His friends, his schoolteacher and the football coach were all green too. The chameleons were pleased with themselves, because they had been able to adjust so well to their surroundings. Their favourite food was green beetle, their football team was named the green grass heroes and their church was made of conifers, since these trees stayed green all year round.

You may not be surprised to hear that all chameleon children had the colour green as their favourite colour. To tell you the truth, nobody ever mentioned another colour because their world was totally green. It was just like that and it was fine.

However, one day Theo's dad called the family together to tell them something new. He shared his plans to his green family. He told them that further down their garden, near the flower bushes there was another chameleon village. And in that village the chameleons had never heard about their almighty Creator. And because of that their pastor had asked Theo's father to consider going there with his family, so that he could tell the other chameleons about their Creator. Theo's father, who had always wanted to see what was behind



the conifer hedge, was very excited about the idea. That's what we should do!! What was more wonderful than sharing about the love of the Creator with the chameleons of the other village. Hence Theo, his brother and sister and their parents packed their suitcases and started their journey.

After a journey of about a week they arrived in their new chameleon village. The green chameleons couldn't believe their eyes! Everything around them was red! These chameleons had also adjusted to the surroundings of beautiful red bushes and flowers. The villagers welcomed the green family into their village. They helped them find a place for them and furnish it. Chameleon women showed Theo's mum how to make beds and beautiful curtains from rose petals. At first Theo had to get used to it all, but very soon it became normal for him to go to his new school and play in his new football team. And without realising it they slowly started to look a little red. The children even more than their parents. They always were in school together with the other kids and played together daily. They started to like hunting for red beetles and loved taking trips to the forest in



the autumn. That's where they discovered many red and white dotted mushrooms, which they loved, just like the red chameleon children. After a long time, when most of the chameleons had heard about the Creator and had got to know Him, a beautiful red church was built. Then It became clear to

Theo's father that he was no longer needed here. From now on the red chameleon villagers themselves were able to share the news of the Creator to their fellow villagers. And so, Theo's father decided to return to his own green village.

For all five of them it was hard to say goodbye. They had lived together with the red chameleons for such a long time, the place had really become their home. Theo's mum and dad reminded their children of the nice things they once did and would do again in their green village. The nice food they would eat and their relatives they would see again. Although Theo tried to imagine all these former fun things, he still felt a little sad. There were so many chameleon friends that he was going to miss. The red chameleons organized a big farewell party for Theo's family. They took pictures of him with his red football team and they received lots of presents. When the whole red village came to say goodbye, most of them had moist eyes. Carrying their backpacks and pulling their trollies, the family walked the long distance back to the green village. It seemed such a long time ago that they had lived there. They had done so many things and had made so many friends while living in the red village, that the memory of their green village had almost disappeared.

After a week of travelling together, they finally arrived at the green village. They were welcomed by their chameleon grandparents and the chameleons of their church. It was a warm welcome. Every chameleon wanted to hear their story. How the journey had been and what exciting adventures they had experienced. Theo's father was asked to speak in church on Sunday. There he shared about the red chameleons and how they had accepted the Creator and loved Him and how they had built a red church in their village. It became a joyful Sunday. Despite all

of this Theo's mum found Theo crying in his bed that night. "Why are you crying, Theo?", his mother asked. Theo told her about his fear of going to school the next day. "But Theo", his mum said, "don't you remember the other kids? They are your friends!" Theo had his doubts about that, but did not want to argue with his mother. So, he wiped off his tears and pretended to go to sleep. When his mother had left, tears kept streaming down his face. Only after Theo had shared all his anxieties with his Creator, he fell asleep.

Surprisingly the first day at school went really well. Theo's old friends were very eager to hear all about his adventures and that he had been so far away. But after the first week at school things turned back to normal and Theo was often left standing alone on the playground. He didn't understand much of what the others were talking about. He missed his red chameleon friends. From the outside Theo looked just like the others, because during his journey back from the red to the green village he had lost his red colour and had turned back to green again. So, he and his family looked like everyone else. But from the inside Theo felt different and often misunderstood. He couldn't wait until school was over and he could return home. There he would reminisce with his brother and sister about the red village. Theo's parents encouraged him to bring classmates home, but his old friends were no longer real friends. Although they looked the same, Theo had changed and felt like a stranger in his old place. In the first month after their return his mum sometimes prepared red beetles for dinner, but the longer they were back, the more his parents adjusted to life in the green village. But Theo kept missing the red village. Although Theo's parents did their very best, they didn't really understand Theo's feelings.

Theo had again started to play football with the green grass heroes and did his best to adjust and feel home again, however it was very difficult. His brother and sister had made a few new friends and did no longer feel like talking about the red village and the red friends. It made Theo feel more and more lonely. The only one who really understood him was the Creator. Theo talked mainly with Him about his loneliness.

Then came the day of the big football match. This year the green village was going to play against the red village. Theo's teammates were very excited. "You have been there, haven't you Theo?" they said. They were eager to meet the children of the other village. But Theo was not happy at all. It meant playing against his old team and, worse than that, he was supposed to be in favour of his green team. However, he still felt part of the red team too. Then came the big moment he had dreaded so much. When he arrived on the field, he felt a tummy ache. As soon as the red team saw Theo coming on the field, they called out: "Hey Theo, so good to see you man." "I missed you all so much", Theo replied. The members of the green team looked at him with surprise and said: "You're not too friendly with the enemy, hey?" Theo wished he could be somewhere else.

The match started. There was great expectation among the spectators, and the teams were equally good. Theo played well because he knew that it was expected of him. But he still felt uneasy. Halfway through the second half of the match came his chance, as the ball was passed to him. He passed the ball to another team member and ran across to the other half of the field, the part of the red chameleons. All of a sudden it became very quiet. Theo thought that it was because everyone was waiting for him to score a goal. He had no idea what was really going on. He again got the ball and with great control kicked the ball right

into the net. Theo looked at the goalie and asked: “Why did you not try to stop the ball?” “I, I...., stammered the keeper, do you know how you look?” “Who? Me?”, asked Theo. He turned around and looked at his tail. His whole body was covered with spots. He had become both red and green.

The coach stepped forward and asked for a short break. He called Theo and said: “What is the matter with you? Have you deserted our team? Are you still on our side?” Theo stood there too shocked to say anything. Then he said with tears in his eyes, “I am loyal to our team. I honestly have warm feelings towards you all, but I feel the same



for my red friends. Today my skin is showing how I have actually felt all the time. I am no longer totally green, but I am also not totally red. I am a little bit of both.”

Dedication:

To all the TCK's I have met, you have made my life richer.

And to the TCK's I have been teaching or I will teach in the future:

You are forever in my heart.

A big thank you to my aunt, Jenneke. Her pictures have brought the story to life.

And a big thank you to Franny, who translated this story into English.

Written by Marieke, a TCK teacher