

# PRAYER POWERLINES

“SOLID, LASTING MISSIONARY WORK IS DONE ON OUR KNEES.” - J.O. FRASER

*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)*

**JULY 2022**

## **PRAYING FOR TCKs**

Global nomads, chameleons, and aliens are just a few terms that Third Culture Kids (TCKs) have used to describe themselves. TCKs are individuals who have faced the joys and challenges of spending all or part of their childhood living outside of their passport country due to their parents' occupation(s). This term has been associated with military kids, children of diplomats, and missionaries' kids, among others. Understanding the TCK experience equips us to provide essential care to our missionary families so that we can see kids and parents thriving on and off the field, becoming all that God desires them to be.

## **SUNDAY • New TCKs**

The process of becoming a TCK starts before a family leaves their home country. In our context getting ready to move overseas can take between one and two years (even longer when impacted by Covid delays). While this can be an exciting time looking forward to moving, it is also a stressful time as families leave jobs and say goodbye to communities, friends and family. Pray for TCKs and their families as they get ready for the field, that they would have strength and perseverance, and set realistic expectations for the moving process. Pray also for opportunities to have meaningful goodbyes, especially in important relationships, like with grandparents and close friends.

## **MONDAY • TCKs Overseas**

A foundational piece of being a TCK is the time spent in a culture different from their parents' culture, typically overseas. Factors including age, available education options, expectations of the host culture, and team composition, all play a significant role in a child's experience. This rich diversity of situations brings difficulties and celebrations, heartaches and rejoicing. As borders reopen, many new TCKs are experiencing the realities of living overseas for the first time. Pray for parents as they walk with their TCKs through both extremes of the spectrum. Pray also for God's comfort and presence as TCKs adjust to the realities of life overseas.

## **TUESDAY • Struggling TCKs**

Little J's mom read him the picture book of a little seed who made the journey from the safe shelf to the scary deep hole in the ground, and finally rose through the surface to the bright beautiful world. "Where do you think you are in the story?" asked little J's mother. Little J, only 4 years old, recently had to leave his home in East Asia to settle in their passport country (U.S.) because of Covid. They had no idea when they would be able to return to East Asia. He replied, "I'm in the deep hole and it's scary." Our TCKs are well acquainted with grief. With their frequent moves, they will have experienced more loss in the first 18 years of their lives than most people in their passport country will experience in their lifetime. Pray for TCKs like little J who are in the scary unknowns of transition. Pray for parents, like J's mom, to feel equipped and encouraged to have these meaningful conversations with their kids about tough emotions, like sadness, fear, and anger. Pray for all TCKs to experience the incredible comfort and peace of being in our Father's hands.

## **WEDNESDAY • TCKs on Home Assignment**

"What's it like to be home?" "Aren't you glad to be back in the US?" "Which country do you like better?" TCKs often receive questions like this when they return to their parents' home country. This period (about 1 year in every 5) known as a "home assignment" can be considered a misnomer by TCKs. Home assignments are often periods of extended transition. On the front end, kids are leaving places where they've lived for years and are being asked to adjust to a new culture and social context. With the brevity of this time, some decide it won't be worth investing in the place or the people. On the other hand, for the kids who have chosen to put down roots during this time, the thought of returning to the field after home assignment can be just as daunting. Pray for TCKs and their families as they travel to and from home assignment this summer. Pray for smooth transitions and God's comfort in the tumultuous times.



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Hope for Billions.

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## THURSDAY • TCKs in College

For many young adults the beginning of college is a long-anticipated step toward independence. For TCKs, sometimes it's a step halfway around the world to a culture that they've only seen once every 4 years. For these students, the transition is not only to the academic and social context of college, but also to a relatively unknown culture. This is especially true if the student's family is still serving overseas. Pray for our college TCKs as they gain independence that they will pursue spiritual discipline and take steps to make their faith their own. Pray that God will provide communities for them where they can build relationships, be themselves, and seek God.

## FRIDAY • Adult TCKs

While many of our TCKs cherish their experience growing up overseas, it is common for these same TCKs, because of their frequent moves, to begin processing significant unresolved grief from their experiences when they reach their young adult years. Pray for our adult TCKs to find the resources, opportunities, courage, and strength to process unresolved grief and trauma. Pray for their healing, that it would lead them into deeper community, closeness with family, and intimacy with Jesus.

## SATURDAY • TCK Care Team

TCK Care workers are essential not only in caring for families during crisis, but also for establishing and incorporating preventative care measures. Resources for TCKs and caregivers are increasing significantly! There is so much that can be done right now to equip missionary families, help their kids thrive on the field, and provide more individualized care than has ever been possible. But we need workers! And we need people to partner with those workers and funds to support team costs in order to make this work possible. Pray that God would bring the right people to serve as TCK Advisors and Advocates within OMF. Pray that generous partners would support these new workers so that this work can be made possible.

## A Letter to TCKs

Dear TCK kids of all ages,

I hope you know what a delight you are—yes, to your own families, but also to your aunts and uncles in God's family. I'm one of those aunts.

Years ago I worked with a couple of other single ladies in a small mountain town. We were quite isolated and looked forward to gathering with other families at the annual winter conference. I think many of you probably did too. It was a time to meet friends that we had not seen for many months. But, I wonder if you knew how special it was for us to see each of you and marvel at how much you had blossomed in a year.

Before we all parted at the end of each conference, you always blessed us with a special performance. What a treat! You sang your hearts out and almost perfectly even remembered the motions. You acted out skits. Some were funny and made me laugh. Others brought tears to my eyes because I knew you wrote them, and they grew out of real-life interaction with truths God was teaching you. I was right there with your parents straining to see the slideshow photos of you playing games, doing crafts and enjoying outings around town. Perhaps you never knew how much you inspired us.

Long after everyone waved goodbye you continued to be an encouragement. You wrote cards and shared stories. You sent photos and reminded us to pray for you. You tried new foods, and during your summer break, came with us to help with camps, cleanups, farming and painting projects.

Although I am retired now, you still stir my heart. Hearing about your career opportunities and realizing the challenges you face gives me pause. I know I need to keep praying for you.

Then one day as I was recovering from surgery, a package arrived. Inside was a painting from one of you. It included various shades of lush grass on layers of rolling hills touching billowy blue skies while puffs of pink blooms cover every inch of space in the foreground. Beside a planted tree the words God gave to Joshua are brushed in white whispers: "*Be Strong Be Courageous Do not be Afraid FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD GOES BEFORE YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.*" I'm well now, but the painting is still by my desk—a beautiful blessing.

Thank you TCK friends! You are reminders of God's faithfulness and beacons of his hope. Know that you are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, one of whom is an OMF auntie.

With a grateful heart,  
Auntie Wanda



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