

Challenges for Third Culture Kids- Who Are They?

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Introduction:

One of a Christian's great privileges and responsibilities is to pray for missionaries.

II Cor. 1:8-11

What is an **MK**?

A **Missionary** Kid

Have you ever **heard** of a **TCK**?

A **TCK** is a **Third Culture Kid**.

I. What is culture?

Very simply stated, culture is “The Way We Do Things Around Here.”

Every place has a culture. Region of the country...Family....church....etc.

With that definition of “culture” in mind, What is “culture shock?”

Take Away # 1 Every place has a **culture**.

Take Away # 2 Culture is learned over time by **watching** and **listening**.

II. Third Culture Kids

Their **First** culture is their **Legal** culture or their **Passport** culture. It is the culture that tells where they are from or where their citizenship is.

Our “culture” goes beyond being an American. It goes down to where we spent our most **formative** years. We might call that place where we **grew up**.

Their **Second** culture is their **Host** culture. That is where their parents serve(d) as missionaries. It is where Third Culture Kids spend their formative years.

The **parents** of TCKs do their best to learn, understand, and adapt to their host culture. They learn a different way of doing a lot of things. This ranges from the simple to the very complex.

The **children of missionaries**, of necessity, learn how they do things where they spend their formative years. Illus. Making friends

Missionary kids **grow up** in one culture while calling **another** culture “**home**.” They most likely return to the United States for college, marriage, and life. They are, in fact, “Americans.” Do they think and act like Americans? One of the most difficult words for a Third Culture Kid to think and talk about is the word **home**.

Their **Third** Culture is their **Relational** culture.

Your relational culture is the people who “**get**” you. They are the people who think, act, process, and relate like you do. Your relational culture is your “**people**.” Your relational culture is your “**tribe**.”

Missionary parents love their kids. They raised their kids to love and serve the Lord. They want God’s will for their kids. However, many watch their kids return to the United States and struggle to fit in and find someone(s) that “gets” them. Some TCKs spend their whole lives without a “people.” Many find themselves very lonely and without a human connection, which we all need.

“Missionary Kids are often lost in the identity of their parents.” Rodney Myers

Many go looking for a “tribe.” Many are in a desperate search for someone that will accept them. They think differently about dress, immigrants, people who speak a different language, politics, world events, the purpose of life, material goods, choices, etc.

Take Away # 3 In most cases, missionary parents are **not** Third Culture Kids and don’t understand them themselves.

On the rise among Third Culture Kids are cutting, gender issues, suicide attempts, etc.

Conclusion:

The cost of doing nothing about understanding and ministering to Third-Culture Kids and their parents is staggering.

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