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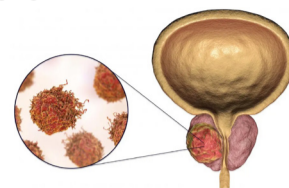
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DEVELOPING A HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY IN THE POST MODERN WORLD



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Holistic spirituality perceives human existence as the integration of mind, body, and spirit, not separated from each other, and all these together must honor God. We should not separate physical health from our faith or mental health but know that ignoring one impairs all.

But the post modern world has a disintegrated view, focusing on

each for its benefit. For example, those focusing on physical health while excluding others head towards spiritual bankruptcy. Conversely, some ignore their physical well being and immerse themselves in spiritual activities, following the ascetic path of life. Some people have mental disorders with spiritual themes. Though they are mentally unfit, they may hallucinate and appear spiritual.

Holistic Christian spirituality also relates to the created order to glorify the God of creation, amazed by the wonders of his creation, shouting forth in praise of God, "How great thou art!" At the same time, it recognizes the God given human responsibility to care for the creation. Post modern cultures preserve and protect creation so that they may live in a better world and keep it for future generations. Thus,

post modern engagement with the creation is ego centric, but holistic spirituality care for the environment because it is God's trust in them. Moreover, creation is a pointer to the creator, which evokes praise for the creator.

Holistic spirituality is other centric than being self centric. A person is your neighbor not because they live

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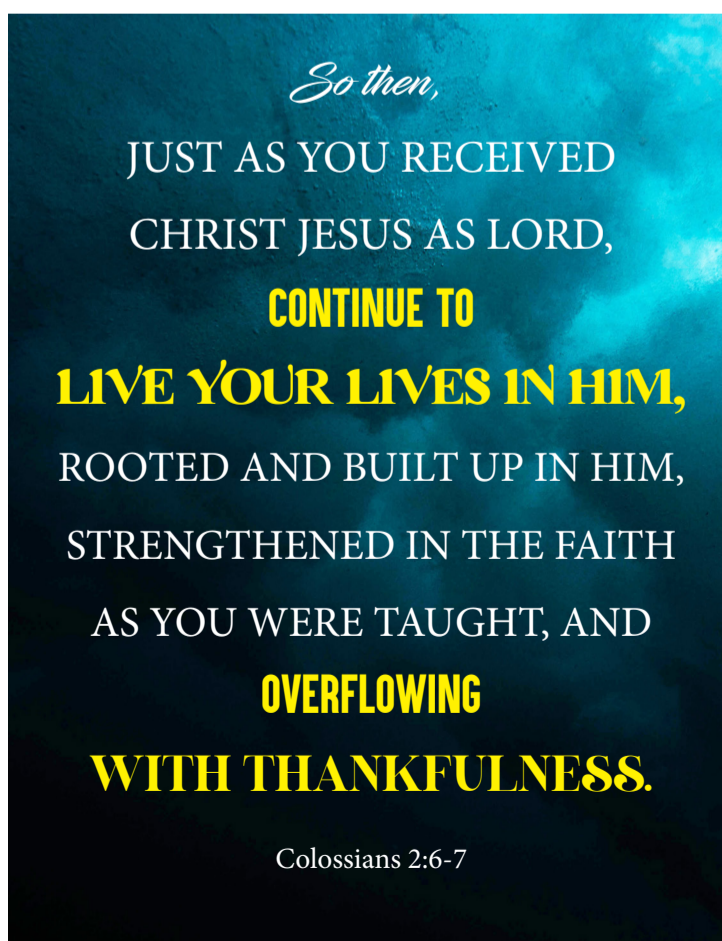
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FROM THE
editor

**DEALING WITH
"FLUID" SPIRITUALITY**

The terms "spirituality" or "spiritual" is no longer a synonym for the word "religiosity" or "religious" as it was understood in the past. Similarly, the boundary between materialism and spirituality seems to be eroding rapidly, even in religious circles. Across most mainstream religious traditions, pursuing spirituality is no longer an overtly ascetic practice of renouncing the world and focusing on transcendental realities, rather, it is more about well being, fulfilment, and happiness, attainable for everyone. In the secular sense, it is rarely associated with a special section of society and special places with special significance. Moreover, spirituality is no longer associated with an external, metaphysical authority or power; in the current pursuit of spirituality, the focus is shifted towards the power of self. Consequently, today, one can be a non believer yet profess to be highly spiritual. Apparently, the philosophical shift from modernity to postmodernity catalyses the new development in spirituality. Postmodern thinking primarily took shape in literature and architecture, and it quickly made its way into other segments of knowledge that led to challenging conventional perceptions of truth and values. In the new philosophical climate, beliefs, values, and morality are fluid. Personal narratives and experiences have significance over conventional truth and fundamental values.

The evolving meaning and application of the term spirituality at present pose several challenges for the future of the Christian faith. In the context of the diminishing influence of the Christian faith, the proclivity to adapt to a 'fluid spirituality' can jeopardize belief in God and all associated values. Similarly, a narrow, sectarian, fundamentalist form of spirituality that emphasizes the external expression of spirituality and ritualistic practices proves inadequate to cope with competing spiritualities in the postmodern pluralistic climate. The current trend in

"A spirituality that has no authentic theological undergirding is gullible. The postmodern tendency to sever spirituality from its root has distorted its value and diminished its power to deal with the human nature of selfishness, resentment and fear under control."

spirituality demands developing a more in depth holistic spirituality that involves all segments of one's life. Those seeking to develop a holistic spirituality would encounter three crucial challenges: theological, socio cultural, and pragmatic.

A spirituality that has no authentic theological undergirding is gullible. The postmodern tendency to sever spirituality from its root has distorted its value and diminished its power to deal with the human nature of selfishness, resentment, and fear. On the contrary, pursuing a spirituality rooted in the person of God and his character has the power to transform human nature. Spiritual expressions are embedded in socio cultural factors. However, compromising the essence of spirituality for the sake of popular appeal is self defeating. The pragmatic challenge concerns the tension between the sacred and secular. The attempt to practice spirituality in the confinement of religious rituals and ceremonies and disconnecting them from all other aspects of one's life leads to moral chaos.

A genuine integration of all these three aspects is inevitable for a healthy spiritual life. One significant instance the bible points towards holistic spirituality is Jesus' command to love God and neighbour, which encompasses all laws.



PURSUING A HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23, NKJV).

We live in a post modern world of hyper reality, where reality and fiction seem impeccably blended. We inadvertently become part of a social media culture that influences and interprets our lives. Though adaptation to the evolving lifestyle is inevitable, we must not neglect life’s fundamental questions about its meaning and purpose.

Scripture passages from both the Old and New Testaments indicate that we are tripartite beings composed of body, soul, and spirit. Genesis 2:7 says, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” From this, we can understand that God created man’s *body* from dust; the breath (*spirit - ‘nishmat’*) is breathed into him and thus made him a living soul (*being/person ‘nephesh’*). Apostle Paul affirmed this by writing, “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole *spirit, soul, and body* be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Thes.5:23).

As we know, the *body* is the outward physical structure of a person with which we perceive the world using the five senses; the *soul* is the locale of the mind, emotions, and will; and the *spirit* is the innermost part of a person that connects with God, who is a Spirit (John 4:24). Our body, soul, and spirit together define our existence in this world. We know from the Scripture that we are God’s workmanship (Eph. 2:10), and as a holistic personality, we are created by God for His glory (Isa 43:7).

When we believe in Jesus, we are regenerated in our *spirit* by the Holy Spirit (Joh. 3:6). Not only our spirit receives the ability to communicate and fellowship with Christ, but it is also the place where He resides (Eph.3:17,

"PURSUING A HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY IN THIS HI-TECH ERA MAY SEEM UNREALISTIC TO SOME OF US. HOWEVER, WITH CONSCIOUS EFFORT, WE CAN ACHIEVE THE SAME."

Joh. 14:23). The Scripture teaches that when we receive Jesus in our lives, we should completely discard our former nature and be continually renewed in our *mind* to acquire a new self of regenerated nature and live in a way that expresses our gratitude for our salvation to God (Eph. 4:20-24). Renewing the mind is essential because it is where we make choices of whether to follow the instructions of the Spirit or to gratify the desires of the flesh. When we align our mind with the Word of God, we exhibit it through our physical body. Paul says to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and well pleasing to God (Rom.12:1). As we reinstate our mind and body to focus on godly values and ethical attitudes, progressively, we will be transformed to comprehend and demonstrate God’s perfect plan and purpose for our lives.

Though individuals, we are also social beings. Therefore, our spirituality is reflected in our relationships and dealings with others. Jesus declared that from the innermost being of those who believe in Him, rivers of living water (Holy Spirit) will flow continually (Joh. 7:38). As we allow the Holy Spirit to take control over us, He will transform us individually and empower us to connect peacefully with God and others.

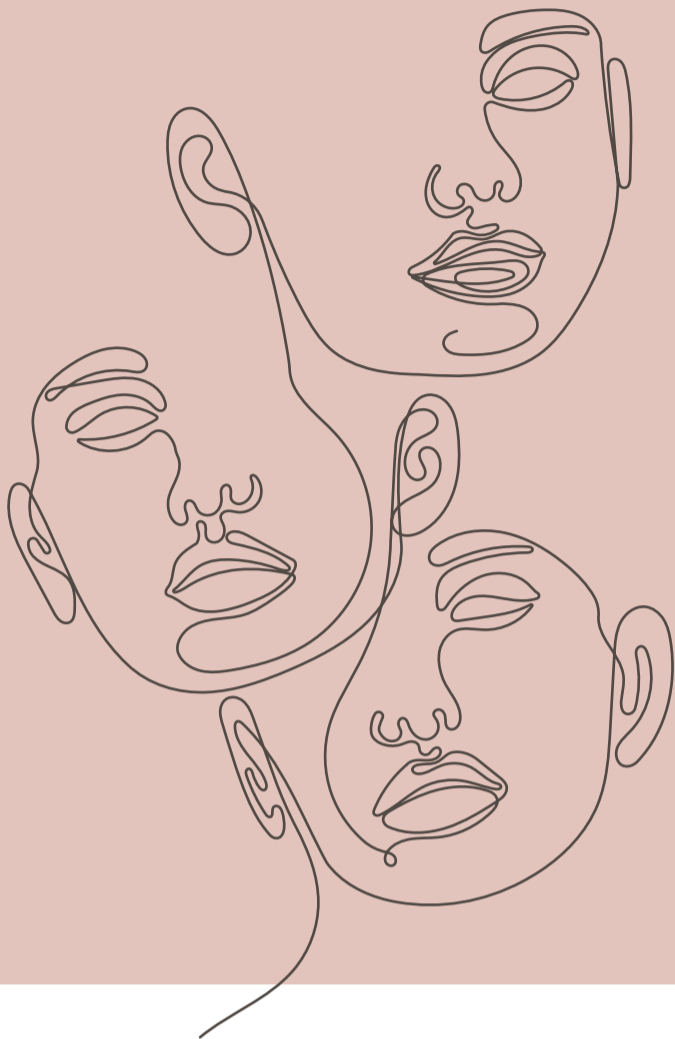
Pursuing a holistic spirituality in this hitech era may seem unrealistic to some of us. However, with conscious effort, we can achieve the same. God’s Word can distinguish between the

soul and the spirit (Heb. 4:12). It can help us recognize whether we are following our soul/ natural self or spirit, which the Holy Spirit leads. But it needs dedication and devotion on our part. Spending time praying and meditating on the Word helps us to train ourselves to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit and be under His guidance. God gives us grace, but we must be disciplined to grow spiritually. We are required to dedicate ourselves to pursuing godliness until we are transformed into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). It is absolutely possible to achieve this even in these times of hyper reality. So, let’s train ourselves!



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Developing a Holistic Spirituality in a Post Modern World

" IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT DEVELOPING AN AUTHENTIC HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY IS VITAL IN A POSTMODERN WORLD OF RELATIVISM AND SCEPTICISM. BY INTEGRATING FAITH AND ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST, WE CAN FIND MEANING AND PURPOSE."

Christian holistic spirituality is an approach to spirituality that seeks to integrate all dimensions of a person's life (body, mind, and spirit) under the headship of Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture with the help of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Apostle Paul prays, "May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is what holistic spirituality aims to achieve. But today, several ideologies present a massive challenge to authentic holistic spirituality. The greatest challenge today, probably, is postmodernism. It is a late 20th century development that rejects the idea of absolute truths and questions the possibility of objective knowledge. It denies the existence of a single authoritative source of truth, thereby rejecting the authority of God's word, and its promotion of pluralism challenges the exclusivity of the truth that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. Unfortunately, this post modern ideology has subtly crept into churches through various forms, affecting theology and church practices.

Some ways postmodernism has influenced churches include using relativism in doctrine, adopting secular cultural practices, prioritising experience/emotion over truth, compromising biblical truths in the name of inclusivity and tolerance and treating churchgoers as consumers rather than disciples. As Apostle Paul warned, many in the church have resorted to 'acting spiritual' but 'denying its power' by embracing

the principles of postmodernism (2 Timothy 3:5). Churches must be vigilant and grounded in biblical truth to navigate these influences and maintain our faith's integrity. The following are practical ways to develop our spirituality in this postmodern era:

1. Be rooted in Scripture: Emphasize the authority of the Bible in our life and its role as the unchanging Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
2. Focus on Christ: Follow the example of Christ and embrace his character in all aspects of our life. (Matthew 16:24, Ephesians 5:1-2)
3. Stand for the Truth: Stand unashamedly for Biblical truths and doctrines which are objective and absolute. (Jude 1:3)
4. Value Discipleship: Invest in people for spiritual growth through lifelong discipleship, prayer and Bible teaching instead of formulaic and consumerist church services. (Matthew 28:19-20, John 15:8, 2 Timothy 2:2)
5. Embrace Fellowship: Attend church meetings and engage with fellow believers for support, encouragement, prayer and exhortation leading to spiritual growth. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
6. Be led by the Holy Spirit, not emotion: Lead a lifestyle of worship and formulate theology not motivated by emotions but by a Spiritled understanding of Scripture. (John 16:13-14, Romans 8:12-13)

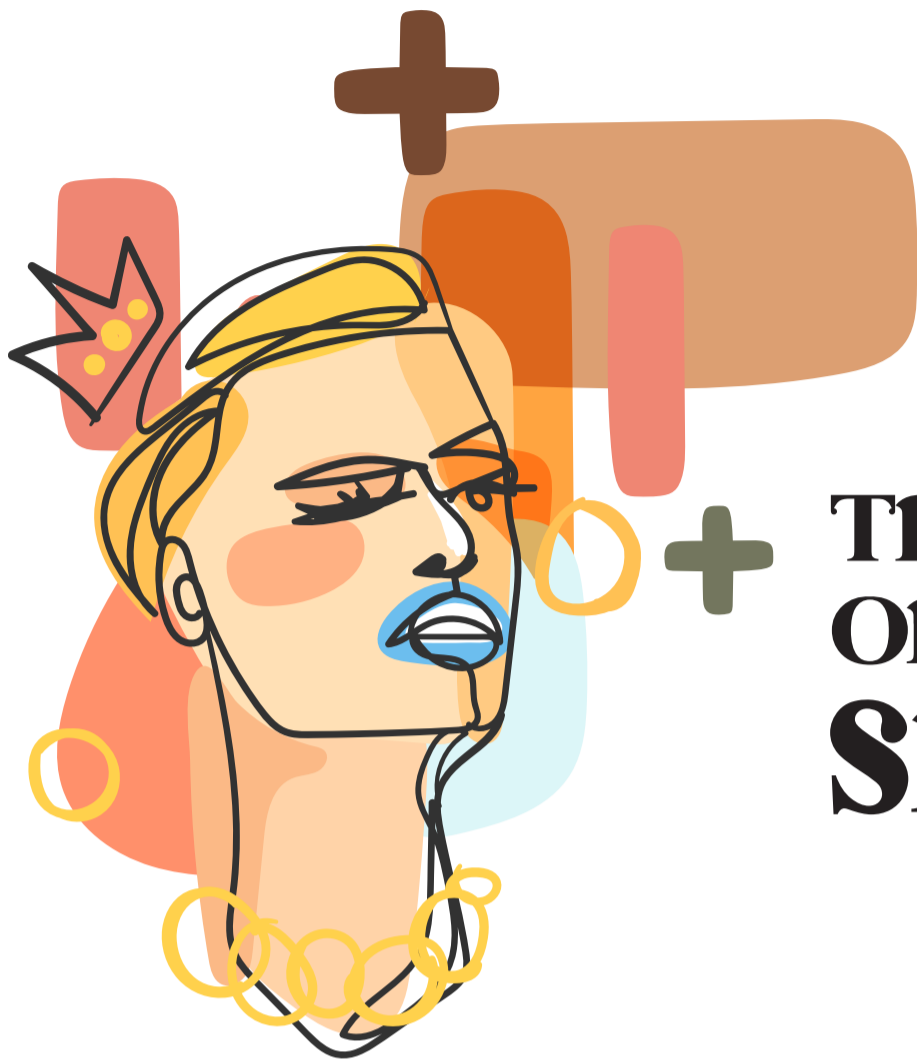
7. Love without compromising Truth: Reach out and engage with the culture in a respectful and inclusive manner but without compromising the truth of the Bible. (Ephesians 4:11-16)

To conclude, it is important to understand that developing an authentic holistic spirituality is vital in a postmodern world of relativism and scepticism. By integrating faith and all aspects of life under the leadership of Jesus Christ, we can find meaning and purpose. Grounded in God's unchanging word and following the example of Jesus, we develop a spirituality that nourishes the whole person and is filled with godliness that is not hypocritical. Speaking the absolute truth of God in love, we become beacons of light, ultimately pointing others to the true source of holistic spirituality: our Lord Jesus Christ.



Pastor Jeswin James Baby
Bristol, UK

Pastor Jeswin is the associate pastor of Mount Church Bristol. He also leads a non-profit organisation called Christian Action for India (CAFI) He has earned BA and MA in Theology. He is married to Fiby Thomas and lives in Weston Super-Mare.



THE CORNERSTONE OF COMPREHENSIVE SPIRITUALITY

"Developing a holistic spirituality from a biblical perspective in a post modern world involves grounding our faith in God's Word centring on Jesus Christ and cultivating a personal relationship with the Divine."

Holistic spirituality is a broad and inclusive approach to spirituality and personal growth. It emphasises the interconnectedness of all aspects of life, aiming to integrate and balance an individual's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. In today's fast paced and often fragmented world, many people experience a sense of disconnection, stress, and a lack of purpose. Holistic spirituality addresses these needs and offers several benefits. The "best" holistic spirituality will be the one that speaks to your heart, aligns with your values, helps you grow personally and spiritually, and fosters a sense of well being and interconnectedness.

In order to develop a holistic spirituality from a biblical perspective in a post modern world, one must deeply meditate on the sacred texts and comprehend the eternal truths they reveal. The post modern world places a strong emphasis on autonomy and pluralism, but a biblical understanding of spirituality emphasises the blending of community, ethics, and faith within the periphery of God's Word.

As a matter of fact, the Bible continues to be the cornerstone for comprehensive spirituality in a world where many different intellectual and spiritual theories coexist. John 14:6 "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" God's revelation to humanity gives us an understanding of the meaning of life, moral principles, and the divine plan. A thorough study and meditation on the scriptures is the first step in developing a comprehensive spirituality to

achieve knowledge, insight, and understanding. In a post modern world, the figure of Jesus Christ can be perceived differently by various spiritual traditions. However, from a biblical perspective, it can be found that Jesus is central to holistic spirituality. His life, teachings, death, and resurrection provide the foundation for understanding God's love, grace, and salvation.

Holistic spirituality involves more than just following rituals or adhering to doctrines. It is about cultivating a personal and intimate relationship with God through prayer, worship, and obedience. This relationship sustains us in challenging times and brings a deeper sense of purpose and fulfilment. A holistic spirituality encourages believers to embody the love and compassion exemplified by Jesus. It entails the condition of loving God with all our hearts and loving our neighbours as ourselves. Practising love and compassion extend beyond our immediate circles to include strangers, the marginalised, and those in need. 1 John 4:7-8 "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God because God is love."

While individual faith is vital, biblical spirituality emphasizes the importance of being part of a supportive faith community. Engaging in fellowship, serving others, and sharing in worship are integral components of holistic spirituality, fostering growth and accountability. A holistic spirituality recognizes human limitations and acknowledges our dependence on God's grace rather than relying solely on our

own efforts. We trust in God's provision and guidance and find strength in times of weakness. 2 Corinthians 12:9 "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on me."

Developing a holistic spirituality from a biblical perspective in a post modern world involves grounding our faith in God's Word centring on Jesus Christ and cultivating a personal relationship with the Divine. Ultimately, a biblical worldview (2 Timothy 3:16-17) provides timeless principles that guide us toward a profound and meaningful spirituality enabling us to navigate the complexities of the postmodern era with grace, purpose, and hope.



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Dr. Binu Daniel is a management consultant, teacher, author, and educationist. He has written numerous articles in well-established English dailies on Economics and Management issues.

LENSE IN THE LIGHT

POSTMODERNISM AND SPIRITUALITIES

Celebration of cultural diversity in Christian devotion to God

"A variety of spiritual expressions and disciplines is delightful to God. I do not think God expects uniformity. God, the author of diversity, celebrates the uniqueness of each individual, tribe, and language group."

Observe several Charismatic church services on a Sunday. It does not matter whether the church is in New York, New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, Chennai, or Melbourne. Their "praise and worship" sessions are more or less identical as if every charismatic church follows a global norm. Music styles, instruments, physical expressions, the order of service, lights, sounds, and even the architecture and layout of sanctuaries are similar.

The power of modern technology, the clout of the "worship industry," and the influence of "worship leaders" have helped to strengthen the notion that there is just one *right way* to conduct a charismatic worship service. Even churches that worship God in their vernacular have switched to translations of English songs. Some Christians are not content unless they sing vernacular songs in an English tune or with an English accent.

Spirituality is what an individual or a community does with what they believe, says Alister McGrath. It is the "outworking" of their faith in public and private acts of devotion. Given the plurality of cultures represented in the Christian world, we must talk about *spiritualities*.

A variety of spiritual expressions and disciplines is delightful to God. I do not think God expects uniformity. God, the author of diversity, celebrates the uniqueness of each individual, tribe, and language group. Why must local languages, music, and art forms be suppressed for the sake of one universal style of spirituality?

In this context, I share the postmodern aversion towards anything promoted globally as the "one right way to do things." Indeed, postmodernism is a philosophical stance that rejects universal truths and values. However, its rejection of an all encompassing frame of reference must be understood alongside its acceptance of multiple reference frames. Postmodernism affirms local contexts, individual experiences, and the resultant diversity.

HSBC Bank ran a campaign to project itself as "the world's local bank." The bank took great pride in its knowledge of the local customs of each country. A global presence is no excuse for offending local sensibilities. Among Christians, though, only trained theologians know the importance of local cultural contexts. This knowledge is seldom translated into action except when showcased in a seminary as part of an in house exercise. I'll cite examples from India; however, the need to embrace diversity in spirituality applies to all countries.

A few decades ago, most vernacular hymns sung in Anglican congregations in India were translated from English. Indian lyricists, including Narayan Waman Tilak (1861-'19), K. V. Simon (1883-'44), Sadhu Kochukunju (1883-'45), Rev Masilamani (1914-'90), and M. E. Cherian (1917-'93), played a vital role in rooting Christian spirituality in Indian cultures. A new generation of lyricists emulated them during the latter half of the twentieth century. The recent boom of Western "praise and worship" (as if songs in other languages do not constitute praise and worship) may be considered a regressive step.

Even if the popularity of Western songs and worship styles *per se* is no cause for worry, the suppression of local cultures should be viewed with suspicion. Most Western missionaries had taken a stand against local attires and customs. They made their trainee pastors wear Western clothes to give them a "civilized" look. It was as though a change of style from *kurtas* to shirts, from the *dhoti* to a pair of trousers, from sporting a moustache to wearing a "clean shaven" look was a part of the gospel package. Spiritual reasons were invented to justify these rules. Surprisingly, churches in the Global South did not perceive this trend as a form of neocolonialism. Indian missionaries repeated the mistakes of their Western counterparts by imposing their culture on those who believed their message.

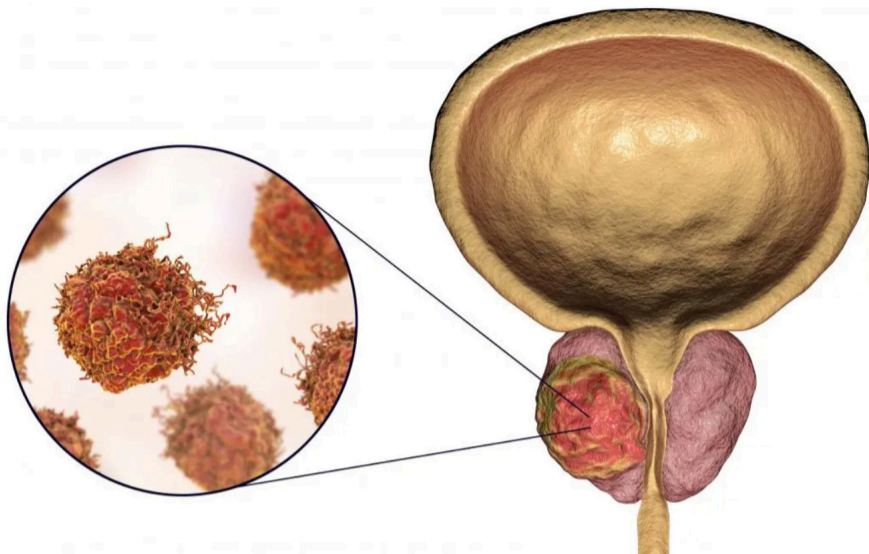


For instance, churches established in northern Indian states by missionaries from the south sing songs translated from Malayalam or Tamil. In Kerala, even in the 1970s, many Pentecostal churches did not permit Christian bands a rarity those days to play Indian instruments such as the *tabla* or *mridangam*. Renowned lyricist composer Bhaktavalsalan recounted how a preacher once threw a *tabla* out of his gospel meeting because he believed it was a product of Hindu culture. The stage was then "purified" by prayer for the proclamation of God's Word! "Indians in northern states are inclined to dance during celebrations such as weddings or religious festivals. Yet how many Christians in India dance during worship services?" asks Ben Wargis, a noted ethnomusicologist. "They were taught that dance has no place in Christian worship, even though the Psalmists encouraged the Hebrews to dance in God's presence." Sheldon Bangera, Vijay Benedict, Anil Kant, and Persis John might agree with him.



Pr. Philip P Eapen
Cochin, India

Pr. Philip Eapen, an Environmental Scientist by training, devoted his life to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. Philip also teaches Christians to equip them for service.



PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING: WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Prostate cancer is a cancer of the prostate, a small gland in men located below the bladder and above the rectum.

Prostate cancer is found mainly in older men. It is one of the most common types of cancer in men. When prostate cancer is detected early, the prognosis of prostate cancer is favourable. About one out of every eight men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Although many men are diagnosed with prostate cancer, most of them do not die from their cancer. Prostate cancer often grows so slowly that many men die of other causes before they even develop symptoms of prostate cancer. But a few aggressive types need to be detected early and treated.

PROSTATE CANCER RISK FACTORS

- Age: all men are at risk, and the risk increases with age. Prostate cancer is rare under 50yrs of age.
- Ethnicity: African American men are at higher risk for prostate cancer than White and Hispanic men. Prostate cancer incidence is on the rise among Indian men.
- Family medical history: Father or brother (1st degree relative) with prostate cancer are more likely to have prostate cancer. Men with hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer and those with female relatives with breast or ovarian cancer related to the breast cancer gene (BRCA) may also be more likely to develop prostate cancer.
- Diet: High in animal fat or low in vegetable intake may increase a man's risk of prostate cancer.
- (UpToDate, 2023; Medscape)

Screening tests (looking for cancer before symptoms are present)

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA):

PSA is a protein produced by the prostate gland. The PSA blood test measures the amount of PSA

in the blood sample. Even though elevated PSA is seen in prostate cancer, it does not necessarily mean that person has prostate cancer because a large benign prostate gland (noncancerous) also can produce abnormally high PSA. Other causes of elevated PSA include prostate infection (prostatitis), instrumentation, bicycle riding, and sexual activity. It is generally advised to avoid ejaculation or activities that can bump your prostate, like bicycle/motorbike ride or horse riding, for at least forty eight hours before your PSA blood test. **Digital Rectal Examination (DRE):**

A digital rectal examination may also be done with a PSA test for prostate cancer screening.

If the PSA is elevated, do not get panic. Noncancerous conditions are the most common cause, but on the other hand, do not ignore abnormal test results. The PSA test is repeated before deciding on a prostate biopsy to rule out. If both PSA values are abnormal without other causes of elevated PSA, the case will be referred to a urologist for further testing/biopsy of the prostate. Sometimes, the urologist will order magnetic resonance imaging (MRI scan) of the prostate and order an MRI-guided biopsy.

PROSTATE BIOPSY:

It involves ultrasound guided use of a needle to get tissue samples from the prostate gland. Usually, this procedure is done in an office setting with local anaesthesia to numb the area. After the procedure, some soreness and blood in urine, stool, and semen are expected. At times MRI guided prostate biopsies are done.

Age to consider screening: Screening discussion should begin at age 50 for men at average risk. Men with a high risk for prostate cancer, such as a family history of a first degree relative with prostate cancer, black men may need to consider screening discussion at age 40-45 years.

How often to perform screening: Once screening is initiated, it should occur every one to two years.

Age to stop screening: Guidelines suggest

stop screening after age 69, though some may continue screening depending on the life expectancy.

Screening not recommended: Generally, screening is not recommended for men with serious health problems whose life expectancy is short and who cannot undergo curative treatment. In those situations, the benefits of screening outweigh the likely harm.

Please discuss this with your healthcare provider for further information.

God has given us the wisdom to take care of our bodies. 3 John 2: Beloved, I pray that you may prosper and be healthy as your soul prospers. Paul states in Ephesians 2:10 that "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God ordained beforehand, that we should walk in them". Let us take care of our body, His temple, to complete the purpose of our calling.



Dr. Jaisy Sonny
Dallas, USA

Dr Jaisy Sonny, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner in the Department of Urology at Veteran Affairs Medical Centre, Dallas, Texas. She mi-grated to the USA in 1997 with her basic nursing degree and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from the University of Texas and Doctor of Nursing Practice from Chamberlain University. Dr Sonny resides in Rowlett, Texas, with her husband, Sonny George and three beautiful daughters.

THE FUNDAMENTALS

FOR THE HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY IN THE POSTMODERN WORLD

Christian maturity and a holistic Christian spirituality are a lifelong journey of spiritual growth and transformation, as believers, we all are expected to become more Christlike in our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. Developing a holistic Christian spirituality in a postmodern world involves integrating timeless spiritual principles with the challenges and realities of the contemporary context. Christian spirituality in the 21st century is a diverse and dynamic landscape that reflects the changing culture, increase in persecution, and technological context of the modern world. This article focuses on the fundamentals of Christian Spirituality because the child of God finds a lot of challenges in the postmodern world. Some of it are listed as follows:

1. RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD: Cultivate a personal and intimate relationship with God through prayer, meditation, and reflection. Seek to know God's character, listen for His guidance, and align your life with His purposes. One should seek to integrate faith with all aspects of life, including work, relationships, and social issues. There is a recognition that spirituality is not limited to Sunday worship but is relevant and transformative in the everyday experiences of believers. Christian maturity involves

developing a deep and intimate relationship with God through prayer and studying the Scripture. Jesus exemplified this in His own life, often withdrawing to solitary places to pray (Mark 1:35). Prayer allows believers to seek God's guidance, wisdom, and strength to overcome challenges and grow in faith. Apply the timeless wisdom and principles found in the Bible to navigate the complexities of the postmodern world.

2. DESIRE TO DISPLAY THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT: I am reminded of the words of the great man of God, whom I respect very highly. His name is Rev. Dr. George C. Kuruvilla. I heard him say, that if he gets the choice of gifts of the Holy Spirit or the fruits of the Holy Spirit. He would prefer the fruits, not undermining in any way the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is because the fruits display the growth in the spiritual life, attracting others to Jesus. Embrace the commandment to love God and love your neighbor as yourself. Cultivate a compassionate heart and actively seek to serve and show kindness to others, especially to those marginalized or in need.

3. SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance, discernment, and empowerment. Allow the

Spirit to transform our hearts and renew our minds, empowering us to live out a holistic Christian spirituality in the postmodern world. Ephesians 5:18 (ESV)

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” “Be filled” in Greek is “πληροῦσθε” (plêrousthe), which is a present imperative passive verb. The present tense indicates continuous action, emphasizing that being filled with the Spirit is an ongoing process and not a one-time experience. The imperative mood conveys a command, making it a directive for believers. The passive voice suggests that this infilling



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is something that happens to believers, not something they do on their own. It should be our lifestyle. The Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in bringing believers into closer communion with God, transforming them to be more like Christ.

4. AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY OF SERVING OTHERS:

Mature and spiritual followers actively engage in serving others and participating in ministry opportunities. Jesus taught that greatness in His kingdom comes through humble service (Matthew 20:26-28). Serving others allows believers to express Christ's love and compassion to those in need. Foster genuine and supportive relationships within the Christian community. Engage in fellowship, accountability, and mutual encouragement. Participate in a local church or spiritual community that promotes inclusivity, diversity, and a safe space for questioning and growth.

5. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ADVOCACY:

Take an active role in addressing societal issues and advocating for justice, equality, and the well-being of others. Stand against oppression, discrimination, and systems that perpetuate injustice, drawing inspiration from Jesus' example of speaking up for the marginalized and oppressed. Isaiah 1:17 - "Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow."

"REMEMBER THAT DEVELOPING A HOLISTIC CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY IS A LIFELONG JOURNEY. IT REQUIRES AN ONGOING COMMITMENT TO GROWTH, HUMILITY, AND AN OPENNESS TO THE TRANSFORMATIVE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. STAY ROOTED IN THE TIMELESS TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL WHILE RESPONDING TO THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE POSTMODERN CONTEXT."

6. ENDURANCE AND PERSEVERANCE:

Christian maturity involves enduring through trials and challenges, and relying on God's strength. Persecution is not a new phenomenon, but the tremor of its intensity is on the rise. James encourages believers to consider trials as opportunities for growth, stating, "The testing of your faith produces steadfastness" (James 1:3). Persevering through difficulties and persecutions deepens one's faith and trust in God.

7. CULTIVATE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES:

Engage in spiritual practices and disciplines such as fasting, solitude, silence, worship, and Sabbath rest. Our children should be taught from the very childhood to fast and get into a

deeper relationship with Christ. My daughter and son, who are 16 and 14, go for a time of fasting and meditation without asking permission for one or two days. These practices can help create space for reflection, renewal, and a deeper connection with God in the midst of a fast-paced, information-saturated gadget world.

Remember that developing a holistic Christian spirituality is a lifelong journey. It requires an ongoing commitment to growth, humility, and an openness to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit. Stay rooted in the timeless truths of the Gospel while responding to the unique challenges and opportunities of the postmodern context.



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DEVELOPING A HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY IN THE POST MODERN WORLD



nearby, but they may be a stranger but helpless and in need (Luke 10:29—37). So, it relates to the needy world around us with the mind of Christ, who fed the poor, healed the sick, and raised the dead.

We should offer our body, mind, and soul to God, the creator. We should recognize that God is very nearby us; as the old saint said, “God is close to us than we are to ourselves.” We also bring the world’s needs to God, whom we recognize as the expert orchestrator of all that happens around us.

Prayer leads us to action. First, we present ourselves as acceptable sacrifices to God, acknowledging that He created and owned us. This means we must keep ourselves mentally,

physically, and spiritually fit. Second, we must serve God’s world, the needy, the poor, and those on the margins of human existence. Third, meditating upon God’s creation to break forth in worship is equally important. Walking or driving with eyes open to the wonders of God’s creation around us is incessant worship.

It takes time and effort to develop a holistic spiritual life. Be patient and persistent; do not give up if you do not see results immediately. Keep practicing, and you will see changes in your life. Holistic Christian spirituality is a journey that is worth taking. It can lead to a more fulfilling and meaningful life for you and those around you.

"Holistic spirituality is other centric than being self centric.

A person is your neighbor not because they live nearby, but they may be a stranger but helpless and in need (Luke 10:29—37).

So, it relates to the needy world around us with the mind of Christ, who fed the poor, healed the sick, and raised the dead."

United Flight 2022 deep dive caused by pilot error



plane’s wing flaps. The incident occurred about one minute after the Boeing 777 departed Hawaii’s Kahului Airport in heavy rain and turbulence on December 18, the NTSB said. Investigators said the flight with 271 passengers on board continued to its destination San Francisco without further issue. The NTSB said statements from the flight crew revealed confusion over the setting of the 777’s flaps, which are typically extended for take-off and retracted incrementally during climb-out. “When the aeroplane reached the acceleration altitude, the captain reduced the pitch attitude slightly and called for the flap setting to be reduced to flaps 5,” the NTSB said in its report. “According to the first officer, he thought he heard the captain announce flaps 15.” The report says the captain, flying the aeroplane at 2,100 feet (640 meters), became concerned about damaging the still-extended flaps and started descending and decelerating until cockpit alarms sounded.

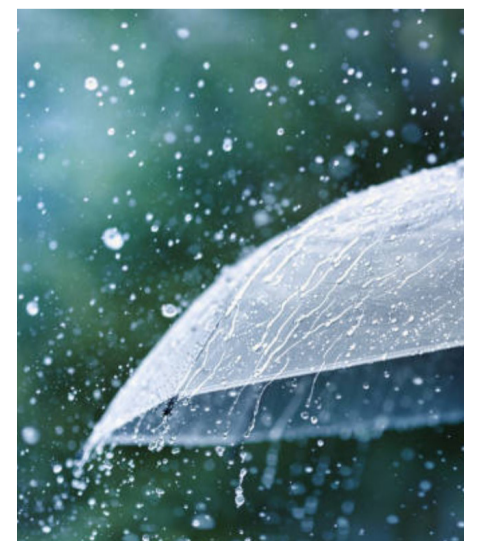
Federal investigators say a 2022 incident where a United Airlines flight came within 748 feet of crashing into the Pacific Ocean was caused by pilot error. In a just-published final report, the National Transportation Safety Board pins the cause of United Airlines flight 1722’s dive on “the flight crew’s failure to manage the aeroplane’s vertical flightpath” after an apparent “miscommunication” between the two pilots over the position of the

World News

Kerala faces record low rainfall compared to the past few years

As Kerala records a 44 per cent deficit in seasonal rainfall, the state is staring at the worst drought in the past few years. According to India Meteorological Department, Kerala only received 877.2mm of rainfall from June 1 to August 16, while normal rainfall figures recorded are 1572.1mm. This translates to a shortfall of 44%. Idukki, where Kerala’s biggest hydroelectric power project is, has recorded the lowest rainfall this season and has record low water levels. Currently, the reservoir holds just 31.13% capacity compared to 80.2% last year. This could affect power generation in the state. Farmers in the state, especially Idukki and Palakkad, are bracing for an impact due to low rainfall

affecting their planting season and potentially future drinking water crisis. Kerala is now pinning its hopes on the Northeast Monsoon, which is expected between October and November.



Tensions mounting on the Belarus and Poland border



Poland is sending 10,000 troops to its border with Belarus following an alleged incursion by Belarusian military helicopters. Its government says they'll help guard against mercenaries from Russia's Wagner group who have moved to Belarus and are now said to be moving towards the border. Poland's government says that on 1 August, two Belarus military helicopters flew at low altitude about two kilometres into its territory in the Bialowieza region. Belarusian armed forces were conducting exercises in the border area at the time. The border between Poland and Lithuania is a line

called the Suwalki Gap. Many military analysts see the Suwalki gap as a potential flashpoint area if there were to be a conflict between NATO countries and Russia. The fear is that if Russia and Belarus were to use military force to close this gap, they could cut off the Baltic republics - Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia - from their NATO allies in Europe. Poland's defence ministry is sending 10,000 additional troops to the Belarus border. It says 4,000 will directly support the Border Guard, and 6,000 will be held in reserve.

China & Philippines dispute over grounded warship Heats up

China again asked the Philippines to tow away a grounded warship - a World War Two-era vessel now used as a military outpost - from a disputed shoal on Tuesday (Aug 8) after Manila rejected Beijing's demand. Tensions have soared between the two neighbours over the South China Sea under Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, with Manila pivoting back to the United States, which supports the Southeast Asian nation in its maritime disputes with China. China's embassy in Manila criticised Washington for "gathering" its allies to continue "hying up" the South China Sea and boat incident. "The South China Sea is not a 'safari park' for countries outside the region to make mischief and sow discord," the embassy said in a statement on Tuesday. The Second Thomas Shoal lies within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and is home to a handful of troops living aboard the former warship Sierra Madre. Manila deliberately grounded the vessel in 1999 to reinforce its sovereignty claims. Manila

has repeatedly accused the Chinese coastguard of blocking resupply missions to its troops there, as it did on Aug 5 when it sprayed a Philippine vessel with a water cannon. China maintains the Philippines' occupation of the shoal is illegal. China claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea, which overlaps with the exclusive economic zones of Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei, Taiwan and the Philippines.



Kerala State Assembly adopts resolution to rename state to Keralam

The State Legislative Assembly on Wednesday unanimously passed a resolution urging the Central government to officially change the name of the State from 'Kerala' to 'Keralam.' The Assembly has sought an amendment in the Constitution, which also refers to the State as 'Kerala.' Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan presented the resolution's contents in the House under Rule 118 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Kerala Legislative Assembly. While 'Keralam' is the accepted and common usage in Malayalam, the State is generally referred to as 'Kerala' in official records, especially English ones. The First Schedule of the Constitution also specifies the name of the State as 'Kerala.'

World News



Hawaii experiencing worst wildfires

Hawaii is no stranger to wildfires, but those past few days are being called some of the worst in the archipelago's history. Their toll has been devastating, though what sparked the deadly fires is still under investigation. Hurricane winds and dry weather, however, helped fuel the flames. Drought or abnormally dry conditions across large parts of Hawaii - including the entire island of Maui - also played a role. According to the US Drought Monitor, around 14% of the state is suffering from severe or moderate drought, while 80% of Hawaii is classed as abnormally dry. Last month the National Weather Service noted that brush fires had been reported in Maui and briefly closed a highway. Forecasters warned at the time that "the risk of fires during this year's dry season is elevated". Scientists also note that some parts of the Hawaiian Islands are covered with non-native grasses that are more flammable than native plants. This, coupled with dry conditions, can cause a spark to ignite a fire that can spread quickly.



Christian homes burnt in Pakistan

A frenzied mob on Wednesday descended upon a Christian colony in Pakistan's Punjab province, attacking and ransacking as many as eight churches, setting them on fire and vandalizing adjoining buildings. Sparked by allegations of blasphemy against two local Christian residents, the violent crowd created panic and fear throughout the area, forcing hundreds of Christian families to flee their homes. The accused, identified as Rocky Masih and Raja Masih, were charged with insulting Islam and defiling the name of the Prophet Mohammed under the controversial Pakistani Penal Code, the U.K.-based group Christian Solidarity Worldwide said in a statement. The mob's anger, fueled by reports broadcasted over local mosque loudspeakers, led to demands for the immediate execution of the two men in Jaranwala city, the group said, adding that although police assured that legal action would be taken, videos revealed crowds attacking the Christian colony.



Virgin Galactic takes on the first space tourists

Virgin Galactic has taken a former Olympian, a University of Aberdeen student and her mother to the edge of space on its first flight for tourists. Ana Mayers, 18, and her mother, Keisha Schahaff, 46, both from Antigua, won a competition ticket. They became the first mother-daughter duo to fly to space together. Jon Goodwin, from Newcastle-under-Lyme, became the second person with Parkinson's disease to go to space, a trip he called "completely surreal". Mr Goodwin bought his ticket for \$250,000 (then £191,000) 2005. The carrier mothership VMS Eve took off from Spaceport America, in New Mexico, at 08:30 local time. The Unity rocket ship separated from Eve as planned fifty minutes into the flight. A short time later, the passengers were given the all-clear to unbuckle and enjoy zero gravity at an altitude of around 85km (280,000ft). They landed back at Spaceport America just over an hour after taking off.

Historic Meeting between South Korean and Japan leaders hosted by the US

On Friday, Mr Biden hosted the first stand-alone meeting among the three countries at the Camp David presidential retreat in the US. It's a diplomatic - but still tenuous - coup for the American leader. South Korea and Japan are neighbours and old US allies but have never been friends. However, an increasingly assertive China has renewed US interest in East Asia. And it has brought together two countries that have struggled to overcome deep historical grievances for decades. Speaking ahead of the meeting, Mr Biden praised the "political courage" of the South Korean and Japanese leaders. "Our countries are stronger, and the world will be safer as we stand together. I know that's a belief that we all three share," he said, while Mr Yoon said it was a "historic day". In a joint statement, they said they opposed China's "dangerous and aggressive behaviour" in maritime disputes in the East and South China Seas. They also agreed to hold regular joint exercises, consult each other during crises, share real-time data on North Korea and hold summits annually.

US places restrictions on certain investments in China

The US administration has set new rules restricting investments by US private equity and venture capital firms and joint ventures in Chinese artificial intelligence, quantum computing and semiconductors. The rules will be subject to a public comment period. Long in the works, the new restrictions are meant to prevent American knowledge and money from flowing to China and to tighten the amount of cutting-edge technology available to the Chinese military. Officials announcing the step repeatedly emphasized their goal was to limit US capital from aiding China's military - not to damage China's economy. "This is a national security action, not an economic one. We recognize the important role that cross border investment flows play in US economic vitality, and this executive order [is] narrowly protecting our national security interests," one official said in a call with reporters Wednesday. China's Foreign Ministry on Thursday said it has "lodged a stern representation" with the US over the proposed investment restrictions, calling them a "blatant act of economic coercion and scientific and technological bullying" whose "real purpose" was to "deprive China of its right to development." In a separate statement, a Chinese Ministry of Commerce spokesperson said China is seriously concerned about the developments and reserves the right to take measures. The order, the spokesperson said, "seriously deviates from the principles of market economy and fair competition" and disrupts global supply chains.

World News



India's PM Modi survives non-confidence motion in Parliament

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has defeated a no-confidence vote in the parliament after a three-day debate. His government was not expected to lose the vote as his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies have a majority. Mr Modi criticised the vote as an attempt by opposition parties to "defame India". Opposition leaders say the vote was moved to force him to speak on the ethnic clashes in Manipur state. Over 150 people have died, and tens of thousands have been displaced in Manipur since May when clashes broke out between the majority Meitei group and the tribal Kuki minority. Mr Modi publicly addressed the violence weeks after a video showing two women being paraded naked by a mob sparked global outrage. The parliament session, which began on 20 July, has been marked by protests from the opposition, which demanded that Mr Modi address the house on the violence in the state. On Thursday, before the no-trust vote, the Opposition walked out of the parliament after Mr Modi failed to mention Manipur over an hour into his speech. Late into his two-hour speech, Mr Modi said the federal and the state government were working together to bring back peace in the troubled state.