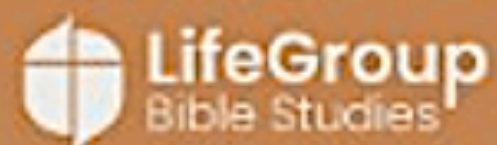




THE STORY
OF JESUS
IN THE
GOSPEL
OF MARK



FALL 2025
SPRING 2026

Disciples and Jesus

- The disciples didn't get that Jesus was God.
- Mark 6:30-44, 52
- After the disciples returned from their mission, Jesus told them to go away to a desolate place and rest.
- This is a good model for us.

Disciples and Jesus

- Jesus often withdrew from the crowds to pray, rest, and recharge. He encouraged His disciples to do the same.
- After busy seasons, we must take time to rest. But Jesus not only rested after a busy season, He took regular time out to pray, rest, and recharge.
- He modeled a consistent rhythm of work and rest.

Disciples and Jesus

- But the crowds saw them leaving, ran after them on foot, and arrived ahead of them.
- Jesus was moved with compassion for the crowds because they were “like sheep without a shepherd.”
- The phrase for compassion is a unique word in the New Testament, only used 12 times, almost always of Jesus’ compassion for people.

Disciples and Jesus

- The phrase “like sheep without a shepherd” comes from Ezekiel, when God condemned the leaders of Israel for being “bad shepherds” to His people, using and abusing the flock for their own gain rather than caring for them as a shepherd should.
- Because they did not care for the flock, the flock became scattered and vulnerable to predators.

Disciples and Jesus

- God said He would come Himself to care for the sheep. He would search for the lost sheep, gather them, and bring them to green pastures (Ezekiel 34).
- This promise had both a near-future fulfillment, that God would bring His scattered people back from exile, and a far-future fulfillment in Christ. The Good Shepherd would seek and save the lost (Luke 15; John 10).

Disciples and Jesus

- Jesus began to teach them many things, and it grew late. The disciples told Him to send the crowds to nearby villages to find food. This was a huge crowd – 5,000 men, plus women and children.
- The nearby village's average population was 15,000. Such a large crowd swarming the marketplaces of the nearby villages would have been overwhelming.

Disciples and Jesus

- Jesus told the disciples to give them something.
- The disciples had just been on mission where they had fed people spiritually and performed miracles.
- He was telling them they already had what the people needed, but the disciples asked if they should really spend more than six months' salary to buy bread for this crowd.

Disciples and Jesus

- Jesus took the five loaves and two fish they had, said a blessing, and divided the food.
- He “looked up to heaven,” reminiscent of the manna coming down from heaven.
- All 5,000 men (plus women and children) ate until they were satisfied, and, still, 12 baskets remained – the number of both the 12 tribes of Israel and 12 disciples.

Disciples and Jesus

- As God supernaturally provided manna in the wilderness, Jesus provided food in the desolate place.
- Even abundantly more than they needed.
- This story reveals that Jesus is more than just a prophet, He is God Himself, the Good Shepherd who cares for His flock and provides for their every need.

Disciples and Jesus

- Mark doesn't tell us how the disciples or the crowd reacted; he went straight to the next story. Immediately, Jesus sent the disciples to Bethsaida in the boat while He dismissed the crowd.
- But after the next miracle, Mark said that they didn't understand the miracle of the loaves because their hearts were hardened. This seems like a strange thing to say about Jesus' disciples.

Disciples and Jesus

- The children of Israel also had hardened hearts even after the miracles in the wilderness.
- The disciples were often confused, fearful and doubtful in the Gospels.
- It wasn't until the Holy Spirit was poured out on them at Pentecost that they finally understood and were filled with boldness to preach the Gospel despite persecution.

Application

- This can be convicting to us who are committed disciples.
- Even we can have hardened hearts at times.
- We worry and fear even though we know we should trust God.
- We doubt God will provide – though we've seen Him do it time and time again.

Application

- Although those who know Christ cannot harden our hearts in such a way as to lose our salvation, we can miss out on some of God's blessings of wisdom, peace and joy. Hard hearts can only be softened by the Holy Spirit.
- It requires submitting of ourselves to His work in our hearts, praying for the Spirit to soften our stubborn hearts, help us understand His Word, and make us more like Him.

The Crowds and Jesus

- The crowds didn't understand who Christ was, but they believed in His power.
- Mark 6:45-56
- Jesus went up on the mountain to pray.
- Not just because it was a secluded place; throughout Scripture, mountains were meeting places with God.

The Crowds and Jesus

- When evening came, the disciples were out at sea and Jesus was on land. The wind was against them.
- Just two chapters earlier, the disciples had been in another storm on the Sea of Galilee, but Jesus had been with them, asleep in the boat.
- This time, Jesus wasn't with them; they thought He was miles away, praying on the mountain.

The Crowds and Jesus

- When they saw Him walking on the water, it makes sense that they thought it was a ghost.
- They had started struggling with the wind at sunset (6:00–8:00 pm), and when He finally came to them, it was the fourth watch (3:00–6:00 am).
- He let them struggle with the wind for a very long time before He came to them.

The Crowds and Jesus

- Again, Mark used the word “terrified,” but this time they were terrified when they thought He was a ghost, not after He calmed the sea.
- Afterward, they were astounded; they didn’t understand, but they weren’t afraid. They were “terrified,” but Jesus told them to “take heart” and “not be afraid” because “It is I.” It’s not a ghost; it’s me.

The Crowds and Jesus

- They should have been comforted by His presence, especially since they had seen Him calm the sea before.
- “It is I” is the Greek version of the phrase – “I AM” – God used when Moses asked His name at the burning bush.
- Jesus also “passed by” them, echoing the way God passed by Moses to show Him the backside of His glory.

The Crowds and Jesus

- The first time Jesus calmed the sea, the disciples were terrified. This time they were “utterly astounded.”
- They didn’t understand this or the miracle of the loaves.
- Both should have shown them His divinity, but their hearts were hardened.
- It seems strange that they were astounded.

The Crowds and Jesus

- They had seen Him calm the sea before, not that long ago. It seems strange that they were confused.
- By now they should have known He was more than just a human king come to rescue them from Rome; He was God Himself come to earth.
- But this was all so much more than they had imagined. They simply didn't get it yet.

The Crowds and Jesus

- When they finally crossed over the sea to the other side and got out of the boat, the people there recognized Jesus, too.
- At this point, He had developed a reputation, especially for healing.
- These people ran all over the region to get the sick and bring them to Jesus.

The Crowds and Jesus

- They asked only to touch the fringe of His garment to be made well.
- The fringe wasn't just a random part of His clothes. It was the prayer shawl that hung out from His cloak.
- It had 613 tassels for the 613 commandments of the law. It represented His prayer life, His intimate relationship with God.

The Crowds and Jesus

- These people did not completely understand who Jesus was and what He ultimately came to do, but they had faith in His power. They believed so much that they knew they had only to touch the fringe of His garment to be healed.
- There may be those in our lives who are at this point in their faith journey, where they're just looking for what they can get from Jesus. We can help them know Him.

Rituals and Your Heart

- It's not external religious rituals that matter, but your heart.
- Mark 7:1-23
- The Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus and asked why His disciples didn't observe the handwashing traditions of the elders. Mark interrupted the story to explain that the Jews had traditions about washing hands as well as cups, pots and even dining couches.

Rituals and Your Heart

- This detail reminds us that he was writing to a Gentile Christian audience, the church at Rome.
- The text is also careful to tell us that the disciples were breaking tradition, not the Mosaic law.
- Jesus never broke the Law, even in the smallest way.

Rituals and Your Heart

- Jesus' response to them was that they were holding to the tradition of men but not keeping the commands of God.
- He called them *hypocrites*, a word He often used to describe the Pharisees, scribes and religious leaders.
- It is the Greek word for stage actors, who wore masks in the Greek theater.

Rituals and Your Heart

- Figuratively, it means one who isn't who they pretend to be. They're just playing a part.
- Jesus said Isaiah described them well when he said they honor God with their lips, but their heart is far from God.
- Their worship was in vain because they taught the traditions of men as if they were the doctrines of God.

Rituals and Your Heart

- He gave an example of one way they rejected a commandment of God to establish tradition – the “corban” tradition.
- Corban means “offering” or “gift,” from the root “to draw near.”
- All five primary offerings were called “corban,” as the general word for offering (Leviticus 1–5).

Rituals and Your Heart

- When each tribe gave items to be used for the tabernacle, they were called “corban” (Numbers 7).
- When the Israelite army brought the spoils of war as an offering, it was called “corban” (Numbers 31).
- Over time, any gift to the temple treasury was called “corban,” and the treasury itself was called “corban.”

Rituals and Your Heart

- The Corban Tradition said that once something was dedicated to the Lord, it was sacred and could not be used for any other purpose.
- Some Jews were dedicating money as corban that should have gone to care for their aging parents, which may have made them look good to the religious people but broke the commandment to honor their parents.

Rituals and Your Heart

- This revealed a heart that was more concerned with looking good than loving people – a hypocrite.
- Paul spoke to this exact scenario when talking about widows, saying if a widow didn't have family, the church should care for her, but if she had family, they should provide her care.

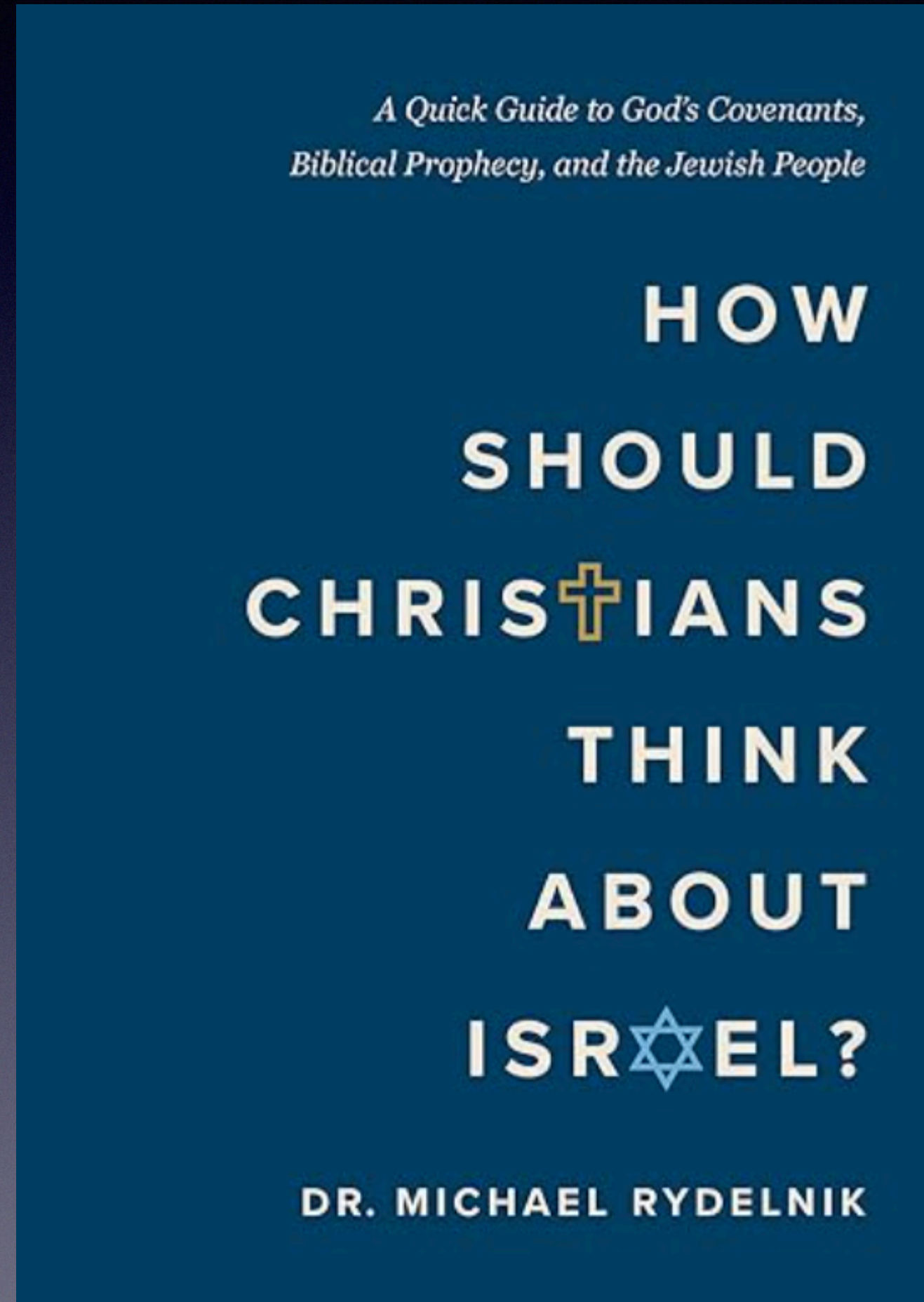
Rituals and Your Heart

- He even said anyone who does not provide for their own family (not just immediate family but any family member in need) “has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:1–8).
- Jesus said, “Many such things you do.” This was just one example of how they elevated human traditions over the Word of God.

Rituals and Your Heart

- Then He explained it's not what goes into you that defiles you, but what comes out. It's not about the external rules; it's about the heart.
- What matters is the impurity in your heart, which will come out in your actions. Those who have the heart of God will care for other people, especially the least of these, even when it's inconvenient. Those who follow all the "rules" without truly loving others are just playing at religion.

Christians and Israel



- Dr. Michael Rydelnik wrote this booklet after the interview Tucker Carlson did with Senator Ted Cruz.
- He answers many of the criticisms of those of us who defend the nation of Israel.

Christians and Israel

- Israel - is the new name God gave the patriarch Jacob, meaning “he strives or persists with God.” His sons became the forebears of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Jews - name used for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The kingdom of Judah was taken into exile.
- Zionism - came from Zion (Temple Mount to Jerusalem) and became a movement to return Jews to Israel.

Christians and Israel

- Romans 3:1-4 - God entrusted Jewish people with the “oracles of God,” and God will still be faithful to them.
- Romans 9:4-5 - Paul’s grief over Jewish unbelief, but to them belong the “adoption and covenants.”
- Romans 11:28-29 - despite their opposition, they are “beloved for the sake of the fathers” and the “gifts and callings of God are irrevocable.”

Christians and Israel

- Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6)
- Abrahamic covenant - Genesis 12:3, Genesis 27:29 - Romans 11:29).
- Antisemitism - Exodus 1:15-16, Esther 9:20-32, Psalm 83)
- Anti-Zionism - delegitimization, double standard, demonization.

Israel ≠ Church

- Different beginnings - Israel and the church
- Different communities - *the remnant* (Romans 11:1-5)
- Different elections - Deuteronomy 14:2, Galatians 3:29
- Different relationship to Abraham

Spiritual Identity Theft

- Spiritual Israel (Romans 9:6)
- Israel of God (Galatians 6:16)
- One new man (Ephesians 2:11-22)

Why Should We Care About Israel?

- Israel is distinct among the nations
- God loves the Jewish people forever
- God has compassion for Israel
- We can care for the Messiah Jesus Himself

*A Quick Guide to God's Covenants,
Biblical Prophecy, and the Jewish People*

HOW
SHOULD
CHRIST⁺IANS
THINK
ABOUT
ISR[☆]EL?

DR. MICHAEL RYDELNIK