



Main Idea: We have so much to learn from the real Last Supper.

Scriptures: Matthew 16:18, 20:16, 26:17-20, John 13:5-16, 21-26, Mark 9:35

[Teacher's Note: this is an immersive experience. To help set the stage and put your students in the moment, I'd suggest setting up some tables like you see in the presentation slides, with a couple side-by-side in a long row and one on each end. By doing this, you'll allow your group to be a part of the experience and imagine themselves in it. If your group is too big, I'd suggest creating a couple of sets of tables for this.]

Hey friends! If we haven't met, my name is _____ and I'm so excited to have you here today as we look at the REAL Last Supper and how what REALLY happened 2,000 years ago between Jesus and His disciples looks a little bit different than that painting Leonardo Da Vinci painted. You may have noticed that the room is set up a little bit differently tonight. You'll understand why in a few minutes. Plus, we might even get to have a few snacks along the way. But before we dive in, let's pray together. [\[Pray here.\]](#)

Let's start with the picture we all have of the Last Supper in our heads, if we have one at all.
[\[Show slide #1.\]](#)

By show of hands, how many of you have seen this picture before? Yeah, when most of us think of the Last Supper, this is the image that comes to mind. Heck, it even inspired the Da Vinci Code and a whole set of crazy conspiracies like 20 years ago.

But I've got to tell you, this isn't at all what it would have looked like 2,000 years ago when Jesus gathered his disciples in an upper room for a meal. Let's set the stage together and hop in a time machine to Jerusalem in Jesus' day. If you want to follow along, you can open up your Bibles to **Matthew 26:17-20 (NIV):**

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'" So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve.

So, what's happening here? Jesus has just ridden into town on a donkey on Palm Sunday. The crowds cheered. Everything seemed great, but under the surface, everything wasn't perfect. His disciple Judas had just agreed to betray him and have him arrested. With all that backdrop, we arrive here, with Jesus having a Passover dinner with His disciples. The Passover was a reminder that God had taken the people of Israel out of slavery and set them free. And did you catch that last detail from what we just read? "Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve."

Ok, let's just do a little show and tell really quickly (except, just the show part.) I want everyone to sit how you would sit at the dinner table. [\[Give everyone a couple of seconds to situate themselves.\]](#) Alright, we've got some great posture, and we've got some slouches. All good. But Jesus isn't doing either of those. He's RECLINING. And that's our first clue that this Da Vinci thing isn't exactly historically accurate.

That's mostly because Jesus didn't have tables like we do. You know, with legs and chairs. No, they ate at tables called *triclinium*. [\[Pronounced: try-klin-eeum.\]](#) Tri- meaning three. -Clinium meaning... clinium? Not really of course. But seriously, it's got the same root as recline. So, it was a three-sided platform where people would recline, usually on pillows or cushions. It would look like this kind of an arrangement.

[\[Show slide #2.\]](#)

Imagine a raised platform with cushions all around the outside of it. Here's an actual picture of a real triclinium from ancient Rome.

[\[Show slide #3.\]](#)

So, if there weren't any chairs, how did people sit at this table? Well, imagine this is as the pose.

[Show slide #4.]

Truly, just imagine Jesus making this pose at the table. And it was TOTALLY normal. Would anyone like to model this pose, just so we can have a real-life example? [Teacher's note: I LOVE to have someone peacock here a little bit and pose in front of everyone. It's a little silly but also let's everyone visualize it with a laugh.]

"Why are we talking about ANY of this?," you might be asking. Well, you may have noticed that we are sitting at a triclinium now (minus the reclining). If that was the only point of this, that would be kind of lame. But this table arrangement wasn't random. There was a whole strategy to where everyone sat.

[Show slide #5.]

You see, in Jesus' day, where you sat was a sign of how important you were. From left to right, the seating went from most important to the least. Imagine your school at lunch time. Are there places or tables where the popular kids sit? Or the band kids? Or the robotics club? You get the idea. Where you sit says something about you. That was even MORE true back in Jesus' time.

So, let's start with the host. They were the one hosting the party or the meal. They were the most important person at the party. It was THEIR party after all. And at this meal, who would that have been? [Let someone guess Jesus.] That's right! It was Jesus.

[Show slide #6.]

The answer is usually Jesus. [At this point, highlight the person sitting in the second to left seat and they get to be Jesus for the night.]

But you might be thinking, if Jesus was the host and the most important person at the meal, why isn't he sitting all the way on the left. Well, it goes back to the reclining. And to serving.



1. What was it like going through that experience? What did you learn that you didn't know before?
2. How did it feel if you were one of the people sitting in one of the "special seats" (like the Host or the Servant)?
3. Let's take a look at each of those seats and who was sitting there...
4. **For John:** what do you think it felt like to be the person sitting next to Jesus?!
5. Who is someone you know you can rely on no matter what? What makes someone reliable?
6. Who are YOU reliable for? Who can rely on you for support?
7. **For Peter:** what does leadership look like to you? How is it different than being a servant?
8. What makes it challenging to do the dirty work instead of taking the lead?
9. How did it feel having your hands (or feet) washed? Was it uncomfortable?
10. How do you think it would have felt to have JESUS wash your feet?
11. **For Judas:** what do you think was going through Judas' mind when Jesus put him in the seat of the guest of honor?
12. How about when Jesus called him out and everyone knew what he was about to do?
13. What makes forgiveness hard? Both when you're the person doing the forgiving AND when you're being forgiven.
14. How do you want to be different going forward because of this experience?

This preview includes a select number of pages from this resource.

If you like what you see, download the entire resource today!

downloadyouthministry.com