

DOING A BIBLICAL DINNER **WITHOUT** FOOD

The Biblical Dinner is a re-creation of the Last Supper that focuses on the tremendous events of John 13. These instructions help you create a dramatic environment to enhance the message of this experience.

Doing a Biblical Dinner without a meal means you only need to set up and decorate a single ‘triclinium’ table and provide a sampling of the food (described below) for a dozen-or-so volunteers sitting around a special table (also described below). Please tell your volunteers they’ll be *sitting on the floor for the entire presentation*. If you have difficulty recruiting volunteers, I can do the entire presentation solo, but the more the better.

To Begin

- **Recruit** around a dozen-or-so volunteers and a two or three people to help with the setup. For your volunteers, costumes are a plus, but not necessary.

Room Preparation

- **Low room-light**, accented by my ancient olive-oil lamps, looks fantastic (I provide the lamps—they’re open-flame, so please check your local fire regulations); otherwise use battery-powered candles (you provide) for ambience. When using the oil lamps, a fire extinguisher must be available in the room.
- **Stage lighting** (if available) makes the table and speaking area look fantastic.
- **Persian rugs** add an exotic look to the room—if you have some, the more the better.

Set Up a “Triclinium” Table



A “triclinium table” is a short, three-sided ancient banquet table. It was “U” shaped and just inches off the floor. Please set up one on the stage or presentation area, like in the photo.

How?

Use three ordinary Costco folding tables: (2) 8 x 2.5 ft. tables for the right and left wings and (1) 6 x 2.5 ft. table for the middle section (like in the photo). This makes the most symmetrical-looking table. Three 6 ft. tables, also works well. With the table legs still folded up, arrange the three

tables into a “U” shape (like in the photo).

- **Elevate** each table length about 1-1.5 ft. off the floor by placing it on 2 sturdy cardboard boxes or similar bases.
- **Make sure** the open end of the “U” faces toward the audience. Seating is around 12 at the smaller table and up to 16 at the larger.

Decorate it...

- **Cover** the triclinium with table cloths (colorful is best)
- **Place** table runners lengthwise down the center of each table (I can bring, or you can use your own)
- **Place** oil lamps or battery-powered candles on the table
- **Put** bowls and baskets of food on the triclinium for your volunteer ‘diners’ to eat. Place the bowls and/or baskets of food to create a colorful, cluttered look (same items on each wing of the table).

What kind of food?

- **The only required food item for the presentation is bread** (preferably pita or other Mediterranean style). For your volunteers, please provide as many pitas as you have people at the table, plus 4 additional pieces for my demonstration. Put out other items like dates, raisins, pickles, shelled nuts, hard-boiled eggs, hummus, un-sliced fresh fruit—just about anything Mediterranean-style. This keeps their hands moving during the presentation for dramatic effect (and in case they get hungry!). Your volunteers will get thirsty, so set out two or three pitchers or carafes filled with water.
- **Put out** small plates, napkins/serviettes and cups for each volunteer diner (no Styrofoam, please, and no flatware!), along with a few hidden hand-sanitizer dispensers.

Finally...

- **Mobile Phones:** Please ask everyone set their phones to “airplane” mode.
- **Recordings:** I encourage photos, audio and video of the event.
- **Sound tech:** If you have a large group, a sound system with a wireless, over-the-ear or lapel mic may be necessary. Let me know if you don’t have one and I will bring mine.
- **Honorarium:** I present the Biblical Dinner on a love gift basis, without obligation (I have received from nothing to a lot, so pray as God leads).
- **Book table:** I have Biblical Dinner books and more, so a self-service resource table is helpful (a volunteer to assist is a plus). Books are \$10 each, or *free* to anyone without funds.

Biblical Dinner FAQ's

What is the length of a Biblical Dinner presentation?

The length can easily be adjusted to fit your schedule. A full presentation usually lasts a couple hours (including a short break), but I've shared a 25-minute version with 2nd graders up to a 4 hours interactive lecture with College classes. There're no rules—you decide—I will accommodate your time allotment.

Is the Biblical Dinner a Passover Seder?

No. The Biblical Dinner incorporates elements of many different ancient feasts including the Passover, focusing especially on the historical Last Supper.

How can my church or organization have a Biblical Dinner?

If you would like to host a Biblical Dinner, just email me to request a calendar date. You can check my speaking schedule on the BDM home page. I highly recommend you consider dates other than the Easter/Passover Holidays—the Biblical Dinner is effective year-round.

How much does it cost to present a Biblical Dinner or Galilean Wedding?

All my presentations and ministries are offered on a love-gift basis only. Any financial assistance towards expenses is hugely appreciated.

How far will I travel to present a Biblical Dinner?

I will *gladly* travel to your location—locally, regionally, nationally and internationally—to present a Biblical Dinner. If you can't afford travel costs, I will come anyway, without obligation—just ask.

For multiple-day or international presentations, scheduling may require arranging dates several months in advance since I am a pastor and must be careful about absences from my church.