

# Are the chips and soda what's offensive?

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

January 7, 2011

When I was at Wheaton, a story (possibly apocryphal) circulated about a student who had been expelled a couple years earlier for celebrating a mock Eucharist on the quad, in which he faux-consecrated donuts and beer. If you wouldn't want to see such a thing, don't watch this video, an ad entered for a Super Bowl contest and then [pulled amid uproar](#):

Offensive? I'd say so. But is the problem the fact that the elements served are foods other than bread and wine? That's certainly not unprecedented--and churches that [get experimental in this area](#) may provoke controversy, but hardly [accusations](#) of *blasphemy*. Is it the use of junk food in particular? Maybe, but the Wonder Bread and "grape juice beverage" I grew up with had at least as much in common nutritionally with Doritos and Pepsi as they did with actual bread and wine.

I think what makes the ad offensive isn't the Doritos-and-Pepsi communion itself; it's the suggestion that more people would go to church if churches focused on providing cheap pleasures people already want--and that this would be a good thing for the church. Looked at that way, the ad starts to come off (intentionally or otherwise) less like a thoughtless and easy punch line and more like satire that offends to make a point.