

# PLAIN SPEECH

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**“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)**

By Scott Parker

## **ABUSES OF THE LORD’S SUPPER**

Abuse, whether it be child abuse, spousal abuse, parental abuse, abusing animals, etc., is always sad to learn of. However, it is especially sad to take note of the various ways in which the Lord’s memorial Supper (**Luke 22:19**) has been abused by man down through time.

**The Corinthians abused the Lord’s Supper.** Hopefully, you will recall that those ancient brethren had “gone off the pier” and exchanged the simple, yet sacred and solemn, Supper for a feast of frivolity. I also trust that you will recall that the local church, there in Corinth, was sternly rebuked by the apostle Paul for their abuse concluding with this remark: **“And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation...”** If you are *not* familiar with this pitiful case of abuse, you may read all about it in **1 Corinthians 11:17-34**.

**Denominationalists have abused the Lord’s Supper down through the years.** Most Baptists, for instance, transgress the admonition given in **1 Corinthians 4:6**. Yes, they, like all their denominational cohorts, blunder by thinking beyond what they can read in their Bibles. Thus, they bypass what is authorized; i.e. a weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper (**Acts 20:7ff**) and implement (without authority) a quarterly or bi-annual observance of the meal that commemorates the sacrifice of Christ.

**Individual Christians often abuse the Lord’s Supper.** This applies to those who are institutionally minded and also to those who are supposedly sound in the faith. The scenario goes this way: two brethren, while on a fishing trip, partake of the Lord’s Supper right there on the lake. Before showing just how said scenario is an abuse, the question must be asked: just why do brethren blow off the local assembly? To do so is to willfully commit sin (**Hebrews 10:25**). Those who do so are very foolish (**Hebrews 10:26-31**). Now back to the abuse of the Lord’s memorial meal. Just how do the fishermen commit abuse you ask? Simple: the Lord’s Supper is to be partaken of only with a local church that is assembled together (**1 Cor. 11:17-18, 20, 33-34; Acts 20:7ff**). Two men in a canoe on “Lake Forsake the Assembly” do not constitute a local church. If they do constitute a local church, then just what of the collection, oversight, etc.? Folks, local churches do not spring up for one hour in tour buses or in an R.V. and then vanish the same day. C’mon.

**Local churches are commonly known for abusing the Lord’s Supper.** This is true in that nearly every local church in this country offers the Lord’s Supper to those who missed the Sunday morning assembly. You, no doubt, are familiar with the scene: brother and sister “choose to work” sit in the pew Sunday night eating and drinking while the rest of the congregation sits by quietly waiting. Well, as you know, the masses are always wrong (**Matthew 7:13-14; 2 Peter 2:1ff**). If those local churches that serve leftovers to the Sunday morning “missers” would ever stop following tradition and start following scripture, then they would quickly see that there is as much authority for a “make-up Supper” as there is for an altar call wherein “The Sinner’s Prayer” is offered.

Perhaps other abuses could be noted (transubstantiation; consubstantiation; women leading, etc.), however the point is made. Now I realize that many abusers in the church will be mad at me for the last half of this article. Perhaps they will even begin to abuse me. So be it (**Acts 20:24**). For too long now the Lord’s Supper has suffered abuse. It’s time to get back to the Bible and do only what is authorized: reverent, congregational action upon the first day of the week wherein the proper emblems (fruit of the vine and unleavened bread) are partaken of in remembrance of the Lord’s death (**Luke 22:19; Acts 20:7ff; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34**).

May all the abuse stop!