

SYLVIA'S CORNER

Control-it's about control

How did the Mormon Church control me, you might ask? First they convinced me that I needed a Prophet, just like there was in the Old Testament. They told me that the prophet's revelations overrode the writings and teachings of the Church. A good example of a time that happened was when Spencer W. Kimball got a revelation contrary to their teaching about Blacks being able to hold the priesthood. In Hebrews 1: 1-2 it says "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

Then they told me, especially during the Temple ceremony, that I owed allegiance to my husband. He was the Priesthood holder, and the leader of the household. Above that, I was to have allegiance to the Church. Then there was to be allegiance to the Prophet, to Joseph Smith, to the teachings of the Church, and to the Bishop.

The Mormon Church claimed to be the one true Church. I felt that I could never leave, because if I did, I would be denying and turning my back on what I thought at the time was the truth. Actually, way before the Mormon Church was founded, Jesus spoke to the Apostle Peter and said in Matthew 16:18 after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the son of the living God. He said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (That rock is Jesus Christ, and the Church was not an organization, but a body of believers in Jesus.)

Too much questioning of the beliefs of the Church was not encouraged. As a matter of fact, my husband even called the Bishop over one night to perform an exorcism on me because I did not believe all that I was reading and being told. Yes -I went through an exorcism in the Mormon Church, and the Bishop later told me that he never experienced such a fight in his life. I would like to know just what he was fighting now that I no longer belong to that organization.

I was so busy in the Church that I had no time to think. This Church family and friends that I made were very important to me. It represented my new family. I didn't want to disappoint them either. I wanted them to think well of me. I participated in Primary, Family Home Evening, Home Teaching, Relief Society, two meetings on Sunday - Sunday School, and Sacrament. Being at

Sacrament meeting every Sunday was a commandment! That didn't leave much time for anything else. When I left the Church, lots of these people, but not all, had no more communication with me. That saddens me, but Jesus said in Matthew 19:29, "And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

To determine worthiness before receiving my Patriarchal Blessing and before getting my temple recommend, I had to be interviewed by the Bishop to determine my worthiness. There were also a couple of occasions when I had to speak to the Stake President. Worthiness issues had to do with no sexual relationship outside of marriage, keeping the word of wisdom - no alcohol, coffee, or cigarettes, etc. God should have been able to determine that a lot better than a man

Lastly, there were secrecy issues. When I joined the Church, I was not told about some of the deeper doctrines of the Church. The Book of Mormon that you are given to read does not mention polygamy, a Mrs. God, the idea that the moon and sun were inhabited, etc. The occult rituals in the temple were secret. And a cause for curiosity. The Mormons would tell you that they were not secret but sacred, but there were very scary penalties for revealing them outside of the temple, so I would call that a secret.

For anyone in the Mormon organization, or for anyone thinking about joining, I would encourage you to take personal responsibility for checking out everything they say by comparing it with the Bible. If it's teachings are contrary, you will know. Think for yourself. Don't be dictated to by anyone. Again, make the Bible your source. You will be surprised how God's word has an answer for any and all false doctrine. If you're not sure about a question you might have, call Ex-Mormons for Jesus, and they will be able to direct you to the right scripture to give you your answer. God Bless You.