

SYLVIA'S CORNER
FAST AND TESTIMONY MEETING

What was it about Fast and Testimony meeting? Why, of all the meetings in the church did I dread this one so?

The idea of skipping one meal and giving the money from it to the poor was a great practice. I was happy to do that.

But it was the hypnotic effect of the service that really bothered me.

Why was it, I thought, that the same people always got up week after week? It was always those same people, saying the same thing; "I believe that the "Church, meaning the Mormon church, is true, and that Joseph Smith is a true prophet of God."

It seems to me now that it was a form of mind control. As it was said over and over again, it reinforced the Mormon belief system, ingraining it deeply and unconsciously into the minds of the people in the congregation.

The other thing about it I noticed, was the emphasis placed on the church and the prophet. Where was the belief pointing to Jesus as God? And why was there such a need for the "CHURCH" to be true anyway? Shouldn't the message be about what Jesus did for us?

Now, as I look at it from the outside, Jesus should have been the key emphasis here, not a church or a mere man proclaiming to be a prophet. And then the next question that has to be asked is WHICH Jesus anyway? In Matthew 24:24, and again in Mark 13:22, it talks about false Christs and false prophets.

God's work clearly says in I Corinthians: 2 that Paul determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Paul didn't emphasize any particular Church or prophet. It was only the relationship with Jesus that was

important. Again in Hebrews 12:2, it tells us to look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

In a Church that calls itself the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have to ask ourselves where the priorities lie. Is it Jesus, or is it the church that is true? AND is it Jesus, or Joseph?