



A Dime from a Dollar

By Lisa Ray Turner
(Based on a true story)

I'm glad to pay a tithing, one-tenth of all I earn; it's little when I think of all God gives me in return (Children's Songbook, 150).

Eight, nine, ten. Hooray!" I cheered as I counted my last dollar. "Mom, I've finally earned enough money to buy the space shuttle."

"That's great, Jacob," Mom said. "You've worked hard, and you've wanted that model for a long time."

She was right. For the last month, I'd been mopping floors, watering plants, taking out garbage—and thinking about the space shuttle model. It had cool flag stickers for the wings and booster rockets that snapped off.

"Can we go to the store now?" I asked.

"It's almost dinnertime," Mom said. "Then it will be time for family home evening. But we could go tomorrow after school."

"OK," I said. One more day wouldn't hurt.

After dinner, Dad spread out 10 pennies, 10 dimes, and 10 one-dollar bills on the living room floor.

"Tonight we're going to talk about tithing," Dad said.

"What's that?" asked my four-year-old brother, Willy.

"It's money we give to Heavenly Father," Dad said.

"It's one-tenth of what we earn."

"What's one-tenth?" I asked. I knew it was a fraction. But in second grade we had only learned about halves and thirds.

"There's a simple way to remember," Dad said. "It's a dime from a dollar, a penny from a dime."

"What happens to our tithing?" Tod asked.

"It helps the Church grow," Dad said. "Some of it is used to build new church buildings and temples."

We practiced paying tithing with the dollars, dimes, and pennies on the floor. It was fun to play with all that money.

But then I thought of my own dollars. I had a sinking feeling. Did I owe one of those dollars for tithing?

"Do I have to pay tithing on my space-shuttle dollars?" I asked. But I didn't really want to hear the answer. I was tired of mopping floors.

"Well," Dad said, "one of those dollars you earned belongs to Heavenly Father. But no one forces you to pay tithing. It's something you choose to do."





For the rest of the night, I thought about doing the right thing—that is, when I wasn't thinking about the space shuttle. Would it hurt to skip tithing this time? Surely one dollar wouldn't make much difference to the Church.

The next day I raced home after school. "Let's go buy the space shuttle, Mom," I called.

"OK," she said. "Get your brothers, and we'll be on our way."

In the car I wondered if I was doing the right thing. I wanted to pay tithing, but I really, *really* wanted the space shuttle.

At the store I went straight to the model aisle and grabbed the box. For some reason, though, holding the box didn't feel as good as I thought it would. And the longer I held it, the worse it felt.

Holding the dollars in my other hand didn't feel right either. Maybe it was because I knew one of them didn't

belong to me. Last night Dad said one-tenth isn't very much to give to Heavenly Father when you think of everything He gives to us.

"Mom," I said quietly, "are there any jobs I can do to earn some more money?"

"There are always lots of jobs," Mom said.

"Maybe I should buy the space shuttle in a few days. Can we come back?"

"Sure," Mom said.

On the way home, I held nine dollars in one hand and one in the other. I felt a little disappointed. But I didn't wonder if I was doing the right thing. I knew I was. ♦