

THE SILVER DOLLAR



By Jeniene Hamson

(Based on a true story)

“Behold, this is the tithing and the sacrifice which I, the Lord, require at their hands” (D&C 97:12).

The big shiny coin sparkled in the sunlight. Alvin twisted the coin this way and that, just to see the way the sun shone off it. A real silver dollar!

Alvin had worked almost the whole day at his neighbor’s farm to earn that coin. His overalls were dirty, and he was hot and sweaty. But it was worth it. He couldn’t wait to show Mother his coin. He was going to add it to his box of important stuff.

The creaky screen door slammed shut behind him as he ran inside. He found Mother sitting in the rocking chair, folding a pile of clothes from the clothesline.

“Look what Mr. Jackson gave me for working for him today.” He held up the big coin for her to see. “A whole silver dollar!”

“Oh, that’s wonderful, Alvin! You must have worked hard.”

“I sure did!” said Alvin. “I’m going to keep this dollar forever.” He rubbed the coin with his shirt to get off any smudges.

“Well,” said Mother, “make sure to pay your tithing on what you earned.” She added another shirt to the stack. “That might mean you have to get smaller coins in exchange for your dollar.”

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Alvin looked down at his beautiful coin. He didn't want a bunch of little coins instead of his first silver dollar. "But . . . I just want to keep it!" Tears pricked his eyes, and he ran out of the kitchen and down the porch steps.

He stomped through the high grass. "I don't *have* to pay tithing," he muttered to himself. He picked up a stick and swung it back and forth across the tall, dry weeds.

Suddenly Alvin stopped in his tracks. He knew tithing was important. He *wanted* to give tithing. But how? He didn't have any other coins. All he had was his one silver dollar. How could he pay the 10 cents for his tithing?

Alvin sighed. He would just have to give up his coin. It was the right thing to do.

Alvin kept walking. Soon he heard talking and singing coming from near the bank of the river. He put up his hand to block his eyes from the setting sun. A family was camped by the river. He had met them before. Sometimes they traded things with his mother.

He looked closer. The dad and grandpa had their fishing poles out. Then Alvin had an idea. He took his stick and started digging in the wet dirt along the riverbank. He dug up 11 worms and walked toward the camp by the river.

The men smiled and waved at Alvin.

"Hi," said Alvin. "Do you need any more worms?"

"We sure do," said the grandpa. He pulled his empty fishing hook out of the water. "We just ran out."

Alvin held out the 11 squirming worms. "Would you like some?"

"How much?" asked the dad. He reached in his pocket to get some coins.

"Just a penny each," said Alvin.

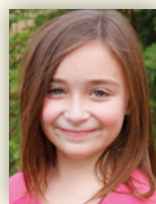
"Well, that's a bargain." The man counted out 11 pennies. "You stopped by just in time for us to catch our dinner."

"Thank you!" said Alvin as he collected his pennies. "Good luck with the fish!"

Alvin hurried back home and showed Mother his coins. "Now I have enough money to pay tithing for my silver dollar *and* for the money I earned from selling the worms!"

Alvin was grateful he got to keep his coin. But he was also proud of himself for deciding to pay his tithing, no matter what. ●

The author lives in Utah, USA.



Tithing helps build temples and churches and gives us blessings. At tithing settlement, your bishop asks if you are a full-tithe payer and have paid all of your tithing. Tithing is 10 percent of what you earn, and if you pay your tithing, it will make you feel good.

Londin H., age 9, Arizona, USA