



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Why do you put the tithing check on the refrigerator door?

By Jane McBride Choate
(Based on a true story)

"I'm glad to pay a tithing" (Children's Songbook, 150).
Kai noticed that every other Friday, Dad put a check on the refrigerator door.

"What's that?" Kai asked.
"It's our tithing check," Dad said. "I put it there to remind us that tithing comes first." He put a magnet over the corner of the check. "I get paid every second Friday. The first check I write is for tithing."
"Even before the house payment?" Kai knew his parents made a payment for the house every month. One time Dad had told him that if they didn't pay it, they could get in trouble with the bank.

"Even before that," Dad said. "Mom and I have always put tithing first. That's one way of showing how important Heavenly Father is to us."

Kai thought about it. "What if you don't have enough money to pay tithing?"
"I've found that if you pay tithing first, the money works out. Or you find a way to do without."

Kai remembered the time the car broke down. They didn't have the money to fix it right away. But Dad said he didn't mind walking to work for a few weeks.

"Wouldn't Heavenly Father understand if you had to pay your tithing late?" Kai asked.

"Heavenly Father understands everything about our lives," Dad said. "But when your mom and I were sealed in the temple, we made promises to the Lord and to ourselves. We decided that we would always pay our tithing first, before anything else."

Kai thought of the allowance he got every week. Sometimes he forgot to pay tithing on it for a week or two. He thought about the money he earned mowing lawns around the neighborhood. It wasn't a lot, since he was only 11. But he decided right then to pay his tithing first—just like his parents did.

From then on, every time Kai earned any money, he set aside his tithing before spending even one penny.

Many years later, Kai had a family of his own. And just like Dad had done, he put his tithing check up on the refrigerator door as soon as he was paid. ♦

The author lives in Colorado, USA.

ILLUSTRATION BY MELISSA MANWILL



Today at church I paid my tithing. I also decided to use almost half of my babysitting money for humanitarian aid and the general missionary fund. I remember that the prophet said that if you can't go on a mission right now, you can send your dollars on a mission. Since I'm still young and can't go on a mission, I will send my dollars on a mission.

Victoria B., age 12, Alberta, Canada