





THE LUNCH

THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Holding my sandwich and peas, I made a fateful decision.

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines

I didn't know many people at my new middle school. Most of the kids I knew went to a different school, and the few friends

I did have were making some bad choices. I was in a tough spot. I didn't want to be a loner, but I knew I needed to leave the friends I had in order to do what was right.

I was going to have to make new friends.

That has always been a challenge for me. My self-confidence was awful. I was super self-conscious. Small talk was ridiculously hard. And I'm not comfortable opening up to people. The few times I tried, things just didn't work out. You know things aren't going your way trying to find good friends when your most promising prospect ends up asking if he can copy off your test. I was beginning to lose hope.

Yet, the prophet had just promised that God could "raise up friends" for those who turn their lives over to Him.¹ That's what I desperately wanted, but I had no idea what it meant to turn my life over to God—until one day, of all places, in the lunchroom.

My daily lunch routine was a series of painful decisions. Sandwich or mystery meat. Peas or carrots. Sit with friends who were headed the wrong direction or sit alone, making it clear to everyone in the room that I was

friendless. Mostly it was sandwich. Sometimes it was peas. Sometimes it was carrots. But I could never bear the shame of sitting alone.

Until one day, as I stood holding my sandwich and peas, I finally decided I would rather sit alone than continue down the path my friends and I were headed. Without realizing it, I had just turned my life over to God. I had chosen what was right over what was easy.

Making the right decision was all He needed me to do. I didn't even have time to take a step toward an empty table before I heard a voice call, "Hey, Adam! Come sit with us."

It was Curtis. I was shocked. Not only was he one of the most popular kids in the school, but I also knew he had a strong testimony and high standards. His group of friends made a space for me at their table. They remained my friends through our school years, missions, and temple marriages.

I learned a couple of really important lessons that day. I learned God loved me. I learned He wanted to bless me but couldn't until I had made my decision to follow Him. And I learned that turning my life over to Him wasn't easy, but it was simple. I just need to choose Him over me. **NE**

NOTE

1. Ezra Taft Benson, "Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations," *Ensign*, Dec. 1988, 4.