

LOVING *the* LORD RAIN *OR* SHINE



By Amanda Dunn
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About eight months into my mission in Brazil, I felt like the worst missionary ever. Nobody we were teaching was coming to church. It was difficult to find people who actually wanted to hear our message. We were striving to work hard and be obedient, but it didn't seem to be paying off.

THE DISCOURAGING DOWNPOUR

There was one day when I felt particularly down. We were searching for someone to teach, without luck, when a severe rainstorm rolled over us. The rain beat hard against our faces, and the sun faded behind huge black clouds. The streets quickly began to flood.

I couldn't believe this was happening! Here we were, trying to be diligent, and not a soul was opening their door. Now, on top of that, we had a torrent of heavy rains to trudge through. It would be hard to find someone to teach in this awful weather. I just wanted to go back to the apartment, where it was dry and quiet. The storm got worse, so I suggested we go home.

But that didn't feel right. The water was already to our calves, but a feeling came into my heart that we needed to keep walking. When I tried to ignore it, I remembered a line from our *Missionary Handbook*: "As you obey with a willing heart (see Doctrine and Covenants 64:34), you will show the Lord your love for Him" ([2010], 4).

Suddenly the warmth of God's love filled my heart and made the cold, uncomfortable rain a little more bearable. I knew we needed to obey the prompting to show our love for Him, even if it was hard. So we kept walking.

THE CALM AFTER THE STORM

The rain continued to pound as we knocked on dozens of doors. Most stayed closed. Some cracked open, only to shut seconds after. But we were determined to keep going. We even laughed as we splashed through the streets, realizing we were probably the only ones in the city crazy enough to be outside.

It was getting late when we came to a small, tin-roofed house. It was totally dark and appeared empty, but we knocked anyway. To our surprise, a woman answered and quickly invited us in to get shelter from the rain. We were so excited that someone had finally let us in!

Even during the storms of life, our love for the Lord and His love for us can help us press on.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL MULLAN





DRAW NEAR TO HIM

“No matter our distress, no matter our sorrow, no matter our mistakes, our infinitely compassionate Heavenly Father desires that we draw near to Him so that He can draw near to us.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, then-Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Love of God,” Oct. 2009 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 23).

The woman’s husband and two kids were there, and they smiled at us—apparently unbothered by the fact that we were dripping all over their floor. We introduced ourselves and asked if we could share a message about Jesus Christ, and they accepted.

The Spirit was present as we prayed with them and for them. They talked about the many struggles they’d had and how they felt a need to reconnect with God. There was a still, peaceful feeling that completely contradicted the violent tempest outside. It was the calm after the literal storm for us and, in many ways, the calm after a figurative storm for this family who had been through so much.

CHANGED BY THE RAIN

Throughout the next few days, I reflected on how silly it now seemed that I had thought my success as a missionary depended only on how many investigators came to church. What really mattered was helping people build relationships with God and find peace in Jesus Christ, even when they faced turbulent times. Doing this strengthened my own relationship with God.

I was transferred shortly after, and although I couldn’t keep teaching that family, I knew I’d always be grateful for the lesson I learned that night. The rainstorm had made me a better missionary and a better person.

BRIGHTER DAYS

I completed my mission 10 months later. The week I returned home, I got a message on social media from a 17-year-old boy named Lucas. His profile picture looked familiar.

He told me that almost a year ago, my companion and I had come to his house during a rainstorm. He was moved by what we shared, and a few weeks later, he decided to go to church. He took the missionary lessons and eventually was baptized.

A feeling of gratitude swept over me as I remembered the peaceful evening we’d shared with his family. Heavenly Father had not only comforted me during that stormy time, but He had also shown Lucas how much He loved him by sending us to his family. My life had changed in that rainstorm, and so had Lucas’s.

Today, Lucas is serving as a full-time missionary in Brazil. He’ll face storms too, probably both literal and figurative, just as my companion and I did—just as we all do. But when we recognize God’s love for us and strive to show our love by obeying Him, we can make it through any weather. We can confront the storms, brave the heavy rains, and look forward to brighter, sunnier days. **NE**





Olá Sister Dunn, meu nome é Lucas não sei se lembra de mim, mas quase um ano atrás você e sua companheira vieram a minha casa durante uma tempestade. Naquela visita fiquei tocado pelas coisas que vocês compartilharam e decidi depois de algumas semanas ir à igreja, receber as palestras e ser batizado. Só queria te dizer que minha vida mudou naquela tempestade.

COME, FOLLOW ME: ALMA 8–12

This month, you'll read about the prophet Alma's preaching in Ammonihah. Like Alma, we may sometimes feel like our efforts to share the gospel are hopeless (see Alma 8). It can be hard to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15) when some people just don't want to hear it.

But Alma was obedient when an angel commanded him to go back to Ammonihah, and even though he and Amulek suffered, God comforted them. They also found Zeezrom, who eventually converted to the gospel.

God will help and comfort us in our trials and disappointments too. And we won't ever be doing His work alone. We can help others as we commit to sharing the gospel, even when it's hard.