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HONDURAS

“Love Lifted Me

As we reflected on all God has accomplished in building a strong Christian community in Tatumbula, the Holy Spirit reminded us that it is all because of God’s love for others. Through salvation, discipleship, strengthened faith, and meeting people’s needs, God has transformed lives. At that moment, the song “Love Lifted Me” came to mind. God reached out in love to lift people from desperation and give them hope. By His love and saving grace, we have seen 1,007 men, women, and children give their hearts to Jesus, and through discipleship, He has transformed the village into a THRIVING Christian community. To God be the glory! With that in mind, we would like to share the story behind “Love Lifted Me.”

The classic Christian hymn “Love Lifted Me” was written in 1912, with lyrics by James Rowe and music by Howard E. Smith. The two men worked side by side to compose it. The melody is especially remarkable because Smith, a local church organist, had severe, crippling arthritis. His hands were so badly knotted that playing the keys was nearly impossible, much less composing the music.

The hymn is deeply rooted in Matthew 14:22–33, where Peter walks on the water to reach Jesus, becomes terrified by the storm, and begins to sink before crying out for rescue. Hymn historians often note a fascinating irony in how they composed it: the opening words are dark and desperate (“sinking to rise no more”), but Smith coupled them with a bright, bouncing gospel rhythm. The joyful tune immediately shifts the focus from the danger of the storm to the absolute certainty of the rescue! WOW!!

They sold the copyright to a music publisher, and it soon caught the attention of Billy Sunday, the most famous traveling evangelist of the early 20th century. Sunday used it constantly at his massive revival crusades. The joyful rhythm caught on so intensely that it became a tradition in many country churches for congregations to literally rise on their toes while belting out the chorus: “Love... lifted... me!”

The first verse uses a clear spiritual image: “I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore, very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more.” These words portray humanity’s hopeless condition without Christ. The turning point comes when “the Master of the sea heard my despairing cry,” showing that salvation begins with Christ’s intervention. The joyful refrain “Love lifted me” then celebrates the saving power of God’s redeeming love.

The second and third stanzas continue with themes of faith, obedience, and service. In verse two, Rowe exhorts: “All my heart to Him I give, ever to Him I’ll cling,” showing that salvation is not merely a one-time rescue but the beginning of a life of devotion.

“Love Lifted Me” has endured over the years due to its simplicity, powerful imagery, and memorable refrain. It is a hymn that resonates with people of all ages, because it connects deeply with the universal human experience of needing rescue and finding it in the love of Jesus Christ. At its heart, this hymn proclaims that when human effort fails, divine love succeeds. The message is timeless: we are helpless without Christ, but His love is mighty to save.

“Love Lifted Me” is a song of hope, a shout of joy, and a reminder that God’s love reaches into the deepest waters to pull us to safety and can help change a village of hopelessness into a thriving Christian Community... GOD IS GOOD!!



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