

# Elvis, Elvis Let Me Be

Tonight was another rare American Idol viewing. We are to start Tuesday night rehearsals soon but it was nice to be off early on a Tuesday night. This week the top nine took on the task of attempting to channel their inner King of Rock & Roll. For the most part, they all did a great job with two very notable exceptions. I have to say how much I idolize the performer who came from nothing and achieved such a memorable place in entertainment history. Not only was he instrumental in the evolution of pop rock music but he also crossed over to country and sang gospel/spiritual music like no one else. I have always appreciated the religious side of Elvis more than any of the other genres. I think these songs showed a personal, vulnerable side that few of his "hits" conveyed (with the possible exception of "In the Ghetto").

In what has been called the "'68 Comeback Special" after the Hollywood era of a long list of movie attempts, the King set out to do what he had done best... perform in front of a live audience. Not only did he perform many of the crowd pleasing songs, but also included a montage of gospel songs. I'm not going to post the nine minute section of the special but here is an equally moving piece that closed the concert:

Remember, it WAS the late 60s. If you put the song into the context of the turbulent times, the song speaks for itself. I don't think he was exceptionally vocal about his world view but his music spoke volumes. He may not have written a large number of songs but the songs he chose to perform was his genius.