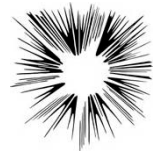




# Grace Snap Shot

*"Viewing life through the lens of God's grace!"*



## Nearly

Written by Art Henkel

The audience of 3,000 stood and cheered as he sang one diamond hit after another. Though I knew all his songs, this was the first time I had ever seen him perform live in concert. His vocals and stage presence was just as I had expected.

As he performed I could hear throughout the fairgrounds chants of, "Neil! Neil! Neil!" That was to be expected since Neil Diamond had been knocking out hit songs since the 1960's and was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1984. This singer-songwriter had sold well over 115 million albums worldwide.

But wait, this wasn't Neil Diamond I was watching, this was Nearly Neil. I was watching a tribute artist named Bobby Bruce perform as Neil Diamond and he was good. Everyone in the audience knew it wasn't the real deal but they were willing to go along for the ride. They sang along to the familiar tunes, danced to the music and cheered their heads off.

As I sat through this concert, I couldn't help but think that there are far too many pseudo-Christian gatherings that function just like this crowd. I'm talking about groups of people who gather with good intentions to familiar sounds and activity, settling for far less than the real deal, that being Jesus. Everything around them seems legitimate from the message, format, décor, and atmosphere but without Christ it's just a well produced, religious knock off. The sad note is that most of those who attend these gatherings aren't aware of the fact.

My advise to you is, "Don't settle for Nearly Jesus." He alone is the way, and the truth and the life!