

Harry Stewart was an American comedian and singer who was born in Tacoma Washington in 1908. He is most well-known for his character Yorgi Yorgesson ... when in 1949 he recorded the 45 RPM single titled *I Yus Go Nuts A Christmas ...* with *Yingle Bells* on the flip side.

In that signature hit, Yorgi laments how much money he spends at Christmas, as well as the hassle of shopping. Not to mention how hard it is to find the right gifts for his wife and kids, as well as the general chaos that surrounds parties and guests and everything else that seems to have taken over the Christmas season.

And if that's not enough, the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, in a recent article claims that Christmas is bad for our brains. The 5 Christmas catastrophes that affect our grey matter are: (1) Seasonal affected disorder, (2) over-eating, (3) drinking too much, (4) too much television, (5) family stress.

Based on those two data points, it would seem that over the last 63 years, Christmas has gone from making us "yus go nuts" to being hazardous to our health. If that's not enough, militant atheists have placed billboards in major cities saying "You KNOW it's a myth."

Why, we may ask ourselves do we celebrate this holiday in our 21st century, highly enlightened, secularized society?

And I would propose a radical solution. Based, of course on the real meaning of "radical" which is "root." My proposal is that we reflect on the roots of Christmas - before militant atheism, before the health issues, before things "yus went nuts."

If we ask, "Why is Christmas such a big deal," we must recognize that it is because God became Incarnate in the form of humanity - as a newborn infant.

And if we take this one step further on the road of "Why?" ... I would like to propose 4 reasons for our reflection.

The Word became flesh (1) in order to save us by reconciling us with God. The Word became flesh (2) so that we might know God's love. The Word became flesh (3) to be our model of holiness. And, the Word became flesh (4) to make us partakers of the divine nature.

If we set aside the commercialization and secularization and stare at the roots of "Why," we see that Christmas is more than the anniversary of the Birth of Jesus. Christmas is a call for all of us to repair relationships, to deepen our love for all people, to strive for wholeness and for holiness, and to recognize our role ... our active roles ... as co-creators; as brother and sisters; as children of God. Christmas calls us all to change the world by changing our hearts and going beyond ourselves. Because in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago ... the Word of God became flesh ... the Son of God was born as an infant ... and ... that ... changes ... everything.

Merry Christmas.

And may God ... bless ... us ... God bless us ... every one.