

**Merry Christmas everyone, this is Fred Nelson for Community Comment!**

**Christmas Day is a special day for many people throughout the world. I do not preach sermons as I am not qualified to do so but I would like to recognize the men and women that are serving in our Armed Forces. Each day, they lay their lives on the line, serving their country and protecting us from harm. Whether on assignment in the far corners of the world or stationed at a military base stateside, they are not insulated from loneliness and family but they are able to cope, comforted by the thought of those they love awaiting their return. Christmas is a season of hope, faith, charity, friendship and love although, looking at today's world, it is sometimes hard to comprehend. From a personal standpoint, I look at Christmas as a time to renew my faith in God. We all slip now and again in our thoughts, in our words and in our deeds. I find that it is a good time to review my personal life with the intent of doing better. I am not saying that New Year's Day is not the time for resolutions, in fact, that just sweetens the pot, so to speak. After spending as many Christmases on this earth as I have, it is difficult to remember each and every one. Mine have all been spent at home except for one, which was in Nineteen Forty Six when I was part of the military occupation forces in Japan following World War Two. Happy not to be on the battlefield as so many had been in prior years, I spent the day with my military companions thankful to be out of harm's way but lonely for my family, as we all were. Some Christmases do stand out in my memory. One was the new bicycle under the tree on Christmas morning; another was the night that my father lit all the candles on the tree. He only let them burn from the time that he lit the first candle until he lit the last one. Don't EVER attempt such a thing. We were lucky. While I am on the subject of "NO-Nos", I will mention one more thing not to do: When I was very young, my father was stringing outdoor lights. He had not screwed in the bulbs as yet and wanted me to test to see if the light cord was plugged in. Rather than go to the source, I took a short cut. Yep, you guessed it; it was a lot quicker to stick my finger in one of the empty light sockets. Yep, you guessed right again, the cord was plugged in. Nope, I was not illuminated or eliminated but I was educated the hard way. In closing, let me add that Rita and I are celebrating our Sixty Fourth Christmas together. Enjoy your day. Rita and I also wish you a Happy New Year.**

**Fred Nelson for Community Comment**