



## Pastor Vlad Savchuk vs Jim Staley: Is Christmas Pagan or Biblical?

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Pastor Vlad Savchuk versus yours truly Pastor Jim Staley, on the topic of "Is Christmas pagan?" Should Christians celebrate this? We're going to dive into it in this virtual debate. It's going to be exciting. You're going to learn a lot, and we're going to unravel some of these mysteries and misconceptions and get to the bottom of this in this broadcast once and for all. Don't miss it. It's coming up right after this.

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Hello everyone, [Jim Staley](#), [Passion for Truth Ministries](#), and welcome to today's broadcast where we're going to be doing an exciting virtual debate with Pastor Vlad Savchuk. Yes, pastor versus pastor on a very sensitive topic. Is Christmas pagan in origin? And should we celebrate it today? He did a [recent video](#) giving his reasons why. I'm going to break that down and give you the other side of the coin. I agree with Pastor Vlad on so many things. I love his ministry. There's so many great things he's doing. So, hats off to that. I'm actually subscribed to his channel. But at the end of the day, and so, by the way, I encourage you to go check out some of his stuff. But at the end of the day, this particular topic, he just academically has it wrong. I don't know if it's misinformation, where he's getting his information from, but I'm going to give you the other side and let you as a viewer determine what the truth is. Don't believe me. Don't believe him. Do your own homework and your own research. Compare notes and decide for yourself what is the truth.

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Now here at this channel, before we begin, we focus on the first century roots of our faith. The Hebraic backdrop from which entire Christian faith stems and is birthed from, understanding Hebrew idioms, the Jewish perspective, the Hebrew culture, language, all of that. That's what we do. Past Protestantism, past Roman Catholicism, past the church fathers, all the way back into the first century. Unless we find out what the authors themselves meant when they originally penned it, we're just going to read into it what we already believe. And that's what this channel is all about, is unraveling that, getting back to doing

Bible things in Bible ways. And one of those topics is Christmas, the holidays. Why is it that we are celebrating Catholic holidays? And why are Protestants defending Catholic holidays? I will never know. But let's dive into it. Let's see what Pastor Vlad has to say. I'm going to let him say his first point in his own words. Here we go.

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*"So, let's start from the beginning. Christmas has pagan origins. Is that true? Now, some people will say, 'Well, pagans used bells, candles, greenery, and decorations.' Yes, they did. But pagans also used buildings, songs, bread, water, wine, or even trees. If we say pagans used something, therefore Christians cannot use it, then we also must get rid of homes, music, candles, weddings, birthdays, calendars, and actually every day of the week. Do you know why? Because the days of the week are literally named after pagan gods. So, let me say this plainly. The origin of a symbol does not determine its meaning today. Current usage does. In the same way, even if the customs appeared in ancient cultures, that does not define what it means today for a Christian family worshiping Jesus."*

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Okay, let's unpack this a little bit because there's a lot that he was saying. Now, his main claim number one is the origin of a symbol does not determine its meaning today. And he talks about how the days of the week were pagan and how pagans invented all these different things. And that is absolutely true. But we have to live in a world that was largely created by pagans. That's not a problem. The problem that he's not discerning is the difference between the objects that are coming down from paganism, such as houses or sandals or the days of the week, which, by the way, were used in ancient Israel. And God seemed to have no problem with that because it's not about the names or what was created by pagans. It's the structure of worship that's the problem. The moment that you take those objects and you put them inside a structure of worship and those objects originally had pagan meanings given to them, and the objects in today's world can be trademarked, which means they can't be generic objects like a candle. But if you take a candle and you twist it into 17 different ways, it has a specific shape, and then you light it for a particular god, now you can trademark that particular shape. That is the definition of "no, no" in God's world.

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Let's go over to **Deuteronomy 12** and I'll show you exactly what God says is forbidden. It's not the calling of the names of the week. It's not specific objects just because they were created by pagans. It's taking objects that pagans used and putting them into a structure of worship to the one true God. Let's go take a look. Deuteronomy chapter 12. This is the litmus for all things, ladies and gentlemen.

## Deuteronomy 12

**"<sup>30</sup>Take heed to yourself," [in verse 30,] "that you are not ensnared to follow them after they are destroyed from before you."**

-NKJV

Now, He's talking about when you go into the land of promised land, you cross the Jordan River, and you see all of these pagans, all the amazing temples and altars to their gods, you better be careful not to get any ideas and borrow those ideas for the one true God. And that's why He says,

## Deuteronomy 12

**"<sup>30</sup>After they're destroyed from before you, and you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I'll also do likewise to my God.' <sup>31</sup>You shall not worship Yahweh your Elohim," [which is what the original Hebrew says,] "the Lord your God in that way."**

-NKJV

He's not talking about worshiping other gods. He's saying, "Look, I don't want you to borrow from their gods, and worship Me."

## Deuteronomy 12

**"For every abomination to the Lord, which He hates, they have done to their gods, for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods." [Very carefully, verse 32,] "<sup>32</sup>Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it. You shall not add to it or take away from it."**

-NKJV

This is a critical scripture, ladies and gentlemen, because it tells us the heart and the mind of God. He is not interested in us being creative and using things and borrowing things that come from the worship of other gods in any way, shape, or form and then insert those objects into the worship of the one true God. And this is what I'm going to submit is exactly what we've done with Christmas. We have taken objects that used to be used in pagan sun god worship and all kinds of pagan worship down through time. It's an amalgamation of all kinds of different customs all towards the worship of different gods. We've put them into one new holiday that we invented, and then

we put a little holy water on there and we said, "Let's offer this up to the one true God."

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Now, one of the problems that we have with that is a scriptural example. Jeroboam, King Jeroboam out of [First Kings chapter 12](#), he decided he didn't want his subjects in the northern kingdom of Israel to go down (I almost said "fly down"), to go down, travel down to the southern kingdom of Judah to Jerusalem and worship God there. He wanted them to stay inside of his kingdom. So he created two places of worship in Bethel and in Dan. And it was not idolatry. It was to the same God. It was the same form of worship, but it was the wrong day and the wrong location. So, Jeroboam tried to cheat the system, create a man-made new holiday, and God condemned it. It's not about the heart of the matter. It's about God's heart on the matter. So, I hope you can see that the issue is not whether or not an object was created by pagans. That's a straw man argument. The object is, did they use that in their worship? We can't use that object if it can be trademarked in the same way to our God. We just can't do it. Imagine, let's just say that the Christmas tree was very pagan in origin. Let's say that it represented a phallic symbol and everyone in ancient Egypt and Rome and even in early Christianity, they knew it. Can you imagine taking the satanic star and putting it and hanging it from your house like snowflakes along the side of other snowflakes? Nobody would do that because of the origin of that symbol. When you take a symbol and it's been used in the worship of another god, it taints that symbol and we are no longer allowed to do it. This is why God said, "Look, I don't need you to be creative. Worship Me in the ways that I've asked you to worship Me." And He gives us that. They're called the feast days. It's God's calendar of the Lord. As a matter of fact, if you want to learn more about the feast days, I encourage you to text "**feast day**" to **844-763-9543** right now and I'll give you a [free download](#) cheat sheet on all of the feast days and how they're all about Jesus and forecast the first and the second coming of Christ in prophecy. It's pretty amazing. I encourage you to do that. Again, text "**feast day**" to **844-763-9543**.

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All right, now let's get back to the broadcast. Let's let Pastor Vlad talk about his claim number two. *"You may say, 'What about the Roman holidays, pagan holidays like Saturnalia and Sol Invictus?' Many Christians think that December 25 simply replaced pagan holidays. But actual historical evidence points to something else. Christians were connecting Jesus's birth to December 25 long before pagans used that day. Pagan celebrations moved toward December 25 as Christianity grew. Actually, not the other way around."* My friends, this just certainly is not true. There is so much evidence to the contrary. I honestly am not exactly sure where He got that from. So, let's walk through it and see what kind of evidence there is. Now, I have an entire documentary built on this subject called ["December 25th on Trial."](#) If you really want to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth on a very academic level, it's very

graphic, kind of a History Channel type of documentary, I encourage you to check that out. Click the link in the description if you want to watch that. You'll really be amazed at how much is really out there. In the meantime, I'm going to give you just a few things.

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All right. First and foremost, there is absolutely zero, when I say zero, there is zero evidence that Christians were celebrating December 25th before it shows up on the calendar in 354 on the Roman calendar, which we'll get to in just a moment. Now, some people will point to Hippolytus of Rome in the 200s and say, "Oh, look, see, Christians were already celebrating December 25th as the birthday of Jesus." And they quote him as saying the following. This is what they say. Hippolytus said, *"The first advent of our Lord in the flesh when he was born in Bethlehem was December 25th, Wednesday."* But here's the problem.

Hippolytus never wrote that. That entire line, "December 25th, Wednesday," does not appear in the earliest manuscripts at all of his commentary on Daniel. It shows up only in the medieval manuscripts written centuries later after December 25th had already become the official Roman Christmas date. Now, why is that important? Well, here's why. Because critical scholars who published Hippolytus, Funk and Bohn, they say that interpolation is certain. Meaning that they, that somebody in the medieval times, went back and reinserted that into the text because they were already celebrating December 25th. They literally put it in the text. Now, the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, which would love to use this quote, admits the December 25th line is not original and it was added by a later scribe.

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Here's what Hippolytus actually wrote in the earliest manuscript. And this is not debatable. You can look this up online. This is the quote: *"For the first coming of our Lord in the flesh in Bethlehem took place in the reign of Augustus in the year 5,500. And He suffered in His 33rd year."* No date, no month, no December 25th, no Wednesday, nothing. So, what happened? A later copyist, living in the time when Rome had already celebrated Christmas on December 25th, inserted that line to update the older manuscript. And the giveaway is the word "Wednesday." Dating events by weekday didn't even show up in early Christian text ever. It's a medieval practice. That alone tells us the line is a later edition. The truth is simple. There's no Christian writer in the 200s who places Jesus's birth on December 25th. The earliest real evidence for that date is the Roman Philocalian calendar from 354. And that's long after pagan solstice celebrations had already been attached to December 25th for centuries. Now let's turn to Plutarch, who literally tells us that the pagans were celebrating sun god worship on the winter solstice, which happened to be December 25th during that time period, for centuries before the 300s. In his writings on Isis and Osiris, the sun god, he states that Isis, upon realizing that she's pregnant, she performed ritual acts, and then quote, *"at the winter solstice gave birth to Harpocrates."* Harpocrates is the child form of Horus, the Egyptian sun god.

This matters because it proves the solar birth theology connected to winter solstice was already fully developed in pagan religions long before the 300s. The concept of a divine sun being, quote, "born" at the winter solstice was not a Christian invention nor a late Roman innovation. It was embedded in ancient sun god worship centuries earlier, especially in Egypt.

0:13:45 Now, Epiphanius of Salamis, writing in the 4th century, provides explicit testimony that December 25th, the 8th before the calendars of January, was already being celebrated across multiple pagan cultures. He states that Greeks, Romans with Saturnalia, Egyptians, Cronia, and Alexandrians with Cicellia, all observe the same date as a religious festival, December 25th. This is not a vague or isolated reference. It is a direct acknowledgement that December 25th functioned as a shared pagan sacred day across all the Mediterranean world. The evidence demonstrates continuity rather than coincidence. December 25th was firmly established as a pagan religious observance long before it was later formalized in the Christian calendar. All that to say, there's no way that someone could say there is no evidence showing that there was pagan sun god worship happening pre-400 AD. It's just not true. The evidence is right here. Further confirmation comes from Rome itself. The Philocalian calendar of 354 AD, the earliest surviving Roman calendar, explicitly lists December 25th as "*Natalis Invicti*," the birthday of the unconquered sun, Sol Invictus. This is not a later Christian mimic or inference. It is a Roman civic calendar. It's a record showing that sun worship on December 25th was already established in Rome. Significantly, the same calendar also records December 25th as the birth of Christ, demonstrating that Christian observance and pagan observance, they didn't arise in a vacuum, but they existed alongside one another and directly on top of an existing solar festival.

0:15:31 Furthermore, the mere fact that the sun god Sol Invictus is minted on Roman coins dating back as far as 100 BC proves the existence of His worship as one of the primary gods of Rome, long before and during and after Christianity even existed and came to be. The Roman calendar of 354 tells us what His day was. It was December 25th. Remember, the calendar of 354 is just the only surviving calendar. Without a doubt, if we had a calendar from 154, it would say the same thing. All the evidence points to pagans setting this day aside as holy to their sun god and Christians attempting to whitewash it. Now, Tertullian, he tells us in the late 100s that the Christians were found celebrating the Roman feast of Saturnalia, and he called them heathens for doing that. The motive to try to take over the winter solstice was obvious and documented. Christians were mixing paganism with Christianity and the church needed to do something about it. As a matter of fact, the Catholic's own bishop in the 1100s, Jacob Bar-Salibi, says this when he completely admits that they changed it on purpose. "*The reason then why the fathers of the church moved the January 6th celebration to December 25th was this. They say it was quote, 'the custom of the heathen to*

celebrate on this same December 25th the birthday of the sun, and they lit lights then to exalt that day. Even Christians were participants in these rites and ceremonies. When therefore the teachers of the church saw that Christians inclined to this custom, they established a plan. The true natal feast would be celebrated on this day, and Epiphany on January 6th." This tells us exactly, ladies and gentlemen, what the concept of the church was. So, a thousand years ago there was a Catholic bishop that already knew the truth, which was December 25th was already pre-existing as a holy day to the pagan sun god worship. Christians were actually engaging in that unbiblical worship and the church needed to do something about it. So they took it over and whitewashed it. The question is, can you do that? We've already demonstrated in point number one, absolutely not. You cannot take a pagan event and whitewash it and offer it to God. That is literally like taking your wife's birthday and going up to her and changing it to your old girlfriend's birthday and saying, "Hey, I want to do this. It's just easier for me to remember my old girlfriend's birthday." You can't do that. She's not going to accept it. It's profane.

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All right. Now, look, at the end of the day, before we go on to point number three, I think it's very interesting that when we call Christmas Yule, it's Odin's day. That's right. Vikings call Yule day Odin's day. Yeah, paganism, by the way, it's just in every corner of Christmas, literally. And Odin eventually becomes Santa Claus. If you want to find more about that, I encourage you to check out the real history of Christmas. And I think you'll find that very interesting. All right, here we go. Let's get back into this here. Here we go. *"Something interesting you must understand is early Christians chose December 25 because they believed that Jesus was conceived on March 25th. Early church fathers like Tertullian and Augustine believed that Jesus was conceived on March 25th. You may say, why March 25th? Because they had this idea that Jesus died on March 25th. Therefore, he must have been conceived on March 25th. The date of His death was the date of His conception. That was their understanding. So add 9 months to March 25th, you have December 25th. That's why December 25th was chosen."*

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All right. I know that sounded good and ancient cultures did believe that. But long after Tertullian, in 200 CE, a Christian teacher in Egypt makes the first reference to the date that Jesus was born. Okay. His name was *Clement of Alexandria*. He mentions all the different days that had been proposed by various Christian groups about what the actual birth date of Christ was. Incredibly, in the 200s, Clement, who is the first one to mention anything about the birthday of Christ, December 25th isn't mentioned at all. Yet, he mentions literally almost every month of the year. But December 25th is mysteriously missing. Yet, we're led to believe that Christianity was celebrating December 25th long before the pagans ever thought about it. This certainly cannot be true, or Clement would have mentioned that December 25th was one of the dates

that was in the running. If they were already celebrating and the date was already locked in, you would think that he would mention it, but he doesn't. Although ancient cultures did believe that great men and prophets died and were conceived on the same date, Tertullian did not apply this belief to Jesus. Period. There's not a single quote anywhere where Tertullian says that Christ was conceived on the day that He died. The idea appears clearly only in later writers, especially Augustine, in the 300s and 400s. Claims that Tertullian believed this are historically false. This is why there's no reference point given. It doesn't exist. Just because something is said online doesn't mean that it's true. We have to have primary sources that show what these quotes and where they came from. Tertullian never believed that Jesus was born on December 25th, and he never mentioned anything about March 25th being the date that he was conceived. The only thing that Tertullian ever mentioned was that he believed that Jesus died on March 25th. But it was only later, when ancient cultures believed that the conception and the death dates were the same, that they retroactively went back and said, "Okay, Tertullian believed that He died on March 25th. Therefore, he must have believed that He was born on December 25th, 9 months later." You can't do that. That's called an interpolation. That's reading back into time something that somebody didn't believe.

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All right, now let's get to claim number four. God can redeem Christmas even if it's pagan. Take it away, Vlad. *"Honestly, even if Christians did choose that date because it was used in the culture for pagan things, it wouldn't be wrong. It would be redeeming culture, not participating in it."* All right. So, it's not wrong to redeem culture. God is into redeeming cultures. Let's see what the Bible has to say about that. First of all, can God redeem Christmas even if it was pagan? Well, I'd ask for one single example, just one, where a pagan holy day, a pagan worship festival, a pagan sacred calendar date is taken, renamed, and approved by God for His worship. There are none. Instead, pagan days are destroyed. Pagan altars are torn down. Pagan festivals are rejected by God, even if they are done in His name. Like the Jeroboam example, God gives His own calendar. He doesn't want us taking things and redeeming anything. God doesn't redeem anything but people and His land.

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**First Peter chapter 1:18** says this,

**1 Peter 1**

**"<sup>18</sup>You were redeemed from your futile ways inherited from your forefathers."**

**-NKJV**

He doesn't say you redeemed from your futile ways so you can now worship Him that way. Deuteronomy 12 makes that clear. We're not allowed to do that. And of course, I mentioned multiple times the sin of Jeroboam with Dan and Bethel proved this. And God only redeems people and land. I mean, think about this, that we tried this at the golden calf where they come out of Egypt. They offer God a golden calf. They want God to speak through the golden calf. How do we know that? Because Deuteronomy tells us when Aaron says, "Tomorrow is a feast unto the Lord." From their perspective, they thought they were worshiping the one true God. But from God's perspective, it was idolatry. He was upset with it. He doesn't want us to invent ways to worship Him, especially using foreign idols and replacing that with the one true God. You see, Israel thought it would be okay to take the golden calf since they're not worshiping a foreign god. They're going to use it to worship Yahweh. And He rejected it violently. God doesn't recycle rival worship, ladies and gentlemen. He replaces it with His own.

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All right, here we go. Pastor Vlad, take it away. *"But here's the real issue. You're not celebrating a date. You are celebrating an event. Jesus's birth was miraculous. It was prophesied about. It was announced by angels. It was witnessed by shepherds. It was worshiped by wise men. It was the moment that God stepped into His creation. So even if December 25th is not the exact date, the event is still worth celebrating."* All right? So, his claim is you're not celebrating the date, you're celebrating an event. I completely disagree and here's why. Try telling your wife, like I mentioned earlier, that you want to change her birthday to the birthday of your old girlfriend and that you're not celebrating the date. You're just celebrating the event and see how far that gets you.

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Ladies and gentlemen, dates matter. If dates didn't matter, God wouldn't have given us a feast day calendar with very specific dates of how He wanted us to do it. We can't just take Yom Kippur and change the date to a different date. We can't take Passover and put it in July because it's more convenient and say, "Oh, we're still celebrating the event." God is not concerned about you and your decisions based on your convenience. He's concerned about our obedience to what He has to say. When we start literally massaging the word of God and changing the heart of God to, "Oh, look, God doesn't care," that's because we don't care. We are projecting what we believe onto what God believes and we simply just can't do that.

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All right, let's get back to Pastor Vlad as he explains how **Romans 14** can be used to prove that we can pick any day that we want to worship Christ. Here we go. *"The fourth argument is, well, the Bible does not command us to celebrate Christmas. That's actually true. The Bible also doesn't command us to celebrate*

*Thanksgiving. The Bible also doesn't tell us to celebrate a baby shower. And the Bible also doesn't say to honor your wedding anniversary. The Bible also doesn't say to celebrate Mother's Day, Father's Day, to use microphones, cameras, or church buildings. Yet, we do these things and we do them unto the Lord. So, the Bible also does not forbid Christians from celebrating Jesus's birth. [Romans 14:5-8](#), Paul talks about people celebrating one day, esteeming another day, and he says the following.*

#### **Romans 14**

**'<sup>1</sup>One person esteems one day above another. <sup>2</sup>Let each person be fully convinced in his own mind. <sup>3</sup>Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.'**

-NKJV

*So Christmas becomes sinful only if you celebrate it in sin. But if you celebrate it as unto the Lord, it becomes worship. [1 Corinthians 10:31](#),*

#### **1 Corinthians 10**

**'<sup>31</sup>Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.'"**

-NKJV

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All right, my friends. I got to be honest. This is just very bad exegesis. Romans 14 cannot be used out of context. The context of Romans 14 is this person thinks this day is okay, this person thinks this day is okay. They're not talking about worship days. In context, it's talking about fasting. The entire chapter is about food, and the author is explaining how fasting was such a huge deal in the first century. Whether you eat on that day or whether you don't eat, you need to do it unto the Lord. The moment that we take it out of context and then we infuse our own ideas of what it means into that, we can make any scripture mean anything. Think of the ramifications, my friends, of using his theology or this formula for interpreting scripture from his perspective, as long as you do it unto the Lord, it's okay. So now I can literally take a satanic holiday, draw a circle on the ground, put the pentagram in there, light the candles, and then pray to Yahweh inside of that pentagram? No, it would never be okay. I don't think any Christian would be okay with that. You can't just say, "I'm going to do it unto the Lord." That means we could have an abortion unto the Lord. That means that we could say, "Hey, same-sex marriages, they're unto the Lord." You could literally change every scripture and just put the icing on top and say, "Oh, I'm doing it for the Lord, so it makes it okay."

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The scriptural example again is Jeroboam. I totally would disagree with Pastor Vlad on this because Jeroboam tried that. He did it unto the Lord. He created two different worship sites at Dan and Bethel, and God rejected it. The Israelites in Deuteronomy 32, at the golden calf experience, they were doing it unto the Lord. Now, most of us have been taught they were worshiping another God. They weren't. The text is very clear. They thought they were worshiping Yahweh through the golden calf because that was what they were used to in Egypt as being the mediator between God and men. You knew you can't go directly to God. So, they created the mediator that they were familiar with and they did it unto God, unto the Lord. And God rejected it. God is not required to accept worship that He did not authorize. That's what Deuteronomy 12 is all about. The moment you cross the line and say, "Oh, they worshiped gods this way. Let's take those and put them in our worship experience and do it unto Yahweh." That's exactly what Pastor Vlad is saying that we can do. And God said, "Don't you dare take what the heathens use to their gods and just say it's for Me. I won't accept it." So that particular claim is blatantly false and very dangerous if we begin to teach people by the millions that you can do whatever you want as long as you do it unto the Lord. That's simply not true.

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All right, let's go to the next clip. *"The fifth argument against Christmas is that the world celebrates Christmas. Therefore, it makes this very suspicious. Yes, the world has commercialized it. Yes, companies have turned it into a huge money-making frenzy. Yes, many celebrated getting drunk and going into greed. But listen, the world celebrating something doesn't necessarily make it evil. It just means that the world has hijacked something that is sacred."*

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All right. Now, I have to stop it right here on one thing because Christmas is not sacred. Sacred, from a biblical perspective, is something that God makes, what's called in Hebrew *kadosh*. He sets it apart. When God sets something apart, it's sacred. When man sets something apart, it's tradition. So, there is a confusion here in terms, and I don't want you to get led astray by that. This is not sacred. We're not taking back something that God gave us that the world polluted, such as marriage and love and that type of thing. God created those things. We're not taking those back. We're trying to take back something that was never given to us to begin with. *"Think about it. The world uses marriage in very sinful ways. The world misuses music. The world twists sexuality. The world abuses drinks and food. Does it stop us from using those things? Absolutely not. We redeem them. And that's why in Philippians 1:18, Paul says,*

**Philippians 1**

**'Whether in pretense or truth, Christ is preached. In this, I rejoice.'**

*Now, Paul wasn't talking about Christmas, but if the world is singing about Jesus, even imperfectly, if in the mall, in coffee shops, you hear about the birth of the Savior, why not use this opportunity to point people to the Savior?"* All right. Like I was saying earlier, the mistake that he's making here is that he's taking things that God made, like marriage and love, and the enemy distorts those. And yes, we can take those back. We're supposed to redeem those. Anything that God made that's holy, we're supposed to keep holy, right? "Be holy because I am holy," He says. But you cannot take something that is unholy. Okay? Like taking a pig and put a little salt and pepper and say, "Oh, it's clean now. We can eat it." No. If God says something is unclean or impure or not set apart for Him, and especially if He says it was used towards another god, like many of the Christmas customs were, as I've already demonstrated without a doubt, we cannot take that date that was pagan in origin and use it towards God. It's forbidden, like I've said multiple times.

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All right. Now his next two points talk about the Christmas tree not being pagan and Santa Claus not being pagan and that they come from Germanic origin. Now, this is interesting because we Vikings come from that Scandinavian background, and like I said earlier, they say that Yule day equals Odin's day, and Odin just so happened to have this sacred mystical tree. Like many cultures, pagan cultures from that time period and beyond, they have these mystical trees, and a lot of times they are evergreen trees. Why? Because they're the only type of tree that stays green all winter long, and they believe that that was some sort of miracle. But somehow inside the culture of Christmas, this mystical tree shows up when there has never been any kind of religious plant that has ever existed inside of Christianity or the biblical culture at all that we are told to worship or to even have inside of our worship ceremonies. The moment you take something that is not prescribed by God that has been used and prescribed by other religions and pagan cultures, you're walking a very fine line.

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So you might say, well, it's difficult to trace the Christmas tree. Yes, for sure it is sketchy. But just the fact that there are so many different mystical trees out there and the fact that just one shows up inside the houses of families today, that just is a little too similar for me. I'm going to err on the side of caution that God would not be okay with it. I can go into great detail on the Christmas tree. I encourage you to watch the history of Christmas [here](#), and there's a lot more information in there. As far as Santa Claus goes, comes right from Odin. I believe that it's very simple. His eight-legged horse becomes the eight reindeer, and then they added Rudolph in the 19th century. And there you go. There's so much involved with Santa Claus. It's not even funny. It's as pagan as you get.

And again, I go into great detail in the teaching that I have on the history of Christmas. I encourage you to take a look at that.

0:34:24 All right, let's go back to Vlad as he talks about one of his final points. *"You may say, 'But what about the pagan symbols and origins?' And internet has a lot of memes searching of taking and highlighting each single symbol and ornament in Christmas story to connect them to some kind of a pagan origin. Now, here's something you need to know. You cannot draw a straight line from ancient pagan ceremonies to modern Christmas. The evidence is simply not there. Now, there are parallels that exist. It's true. But parallels are not the proof. If we removed everything pagans ever touched, we would need to stop using calendars. We would stop driving or wearing Nike. We will need to get rid of wedding rings. We will need to cancel birthdays. We will need to remove every evergreen plant tree. We will need to never sing songs in minor keys. And we will need to avoid every city named after a Roman god. In other words, we're going to have to leave the world. But Jesus said, 'I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.'"*

0:35:30 All right. So, yeah, we've addressed this a couple of different times, but he's setting up a straw man here, unintentionally, I believe, where he is saying that, you know, we're going to have to get rid of wedding rings and you can't go to cities. No, we've already differentiated between objects that were named by pagans or objects that were used by pagans, and objects that were used by pagans in worship. There is a huge difference because the scripture delineation out of Deuteronomy chapter 12 is specifically and exclusively talking about using pagan items in worship. Once you do that, you're crossing the line. If you are going into a city named Janus, it is what it is. You're not crossing a biblical line. Even in ancient Israel, they used the names of foreign gods because they went into Babylon and they adopted some of those names into their calendar. And some of those names are, quite honestly, enemy. But they redefined what those names meant. They did not worship God through the calendar names. The names of the calendars were just because of the world that they were living in. And so that's the same with Nike, with Adidas, and all the other examples that he gave, wedding rings, those things don't matter because we're not using those in form and structure inside of a worship setting. And again, just to bring it home, the moment we take something that was used by pagans that was used in the form of the worship of their gods, that's when it is forbidden. Okay.

0:37:04 All right. *"Let's go to his closing statement and then I'll make mine. Now, should Christians celebrate Christmas? So, the biblical principle goes like this. If your conscience allows you, celebrate it to the glory of God. If your conscience bothers you, don't celebrate it, but also don't judge others. Romans 14 says it beautifully. If you celebrate it, do it as unto the Lord. If you don't celebrate it,*

*don't do it as unto the Lord. But don't bind others with your personal convictions."*

0:37:34

All right. So, Pastor Vlad just made his closing statement. And I'm going to make mine in just a moment. But I want to point out that this particular doctrine and formula that he's creating from Romans 14 is extraordinarily dangerous. I don't think he's thinking through this. I don't believe that he has any kind of ill intent here whatsoever of creating a problem for Christian thinking. But if we take Romans 14, which is specifically talking about fasting, and when it says that you can choose whatever day you want, it's because God didn't tell them which day to fast. So, if God doesn't tell us which day to fast, then you can choose your own day and you have to do it unto the Lord. He who eats, eat unto the Lord. He who doesn't eat, eat unto the Lord, as it says. But when you're talking about holy days, God very clearly tells us, do not offer anything up to Me that I didn't already tell you to do. Don't do it. Unless it's ratified by scripture, you just simply can't do it. That's why Purim and Hanukkah, you can make a case that there's no problem there because it's done by Esther. It was ratified by the prophets. Hanukkah, Jesus was walking amongst Solomon's portico and in, I believe, [John chapter 10](#), and there was no problem there when Jesus called out every problem that He could possibly find. And those events represent biblical history with tremendous biblical values. But Christmas comes from things that are not biblical. God doesn't tell you to celebrate them. There's no biblical authorship that's condoning them. In fact, the biblical scriptures condemn taking anything that's pagan. And we've already proven that December 25th itself was pagan. Many of the items can be found within paganism. And those that can't are crazy questionable and eerily similar to what some of the other pagans did. So, when you take His final closing statement and you break it down, what he's really saying is that, hey, your conscience trumps the word of God, that you just go by your feelings, go by your conscience. If you want to do it, great. If you don't want to do it, can you imagine if all of Christianity just took the Bible, put it aside, and said, "Hey, whatever you feel, that's what you need to do." And I know that's not ultimately what he's really saying, but that's what he's actually saying through his actual words. And so, unfortunately on this particular broadcast with this particular topic, I disagree with Pastor Vlad on this.

0:40:00

So, let me move into my closing statement and find out exactly everything that we've learned as we've gone through this virtual debate. So, let's bring this home, my friends. Historically, the evidence is abundant and it's clear. December 25th was, without a doubt, widespread in pagan cultures. It was all about solar rebirth long before the church formalized Christmas. That date was already taken. Pagans on their calendar, done. Christians added it later. We see this in Egyptian, Greek, and Roman sources long before Christianity even existed. We see it acknowledged by the church leaders themselves. And we

see later explanations openly admitting that the date was adopted to redirect existing customs, not revealed by God. It was not the other way around. Christians syncretized, borrowed traditions from the pagans, and then tried to take over that pagan date. As a matter of fact, they did take it over. And God condemns that. You simply can't do it. **Deuteronomy 12** makes it clear.

0:41:00 We learn that you cannot take **Romans 14**, where it's talking about each person choosing his own day of fasting unto the Lord, and change it to mean that each person now has the right to pick whatever day he wants for anything as long as he does it unto the Lord. That's dangerous theology and it forces our conscience to be the ultimate authority instead of the word of God. We also learned that God has never and will never redeem anything that was not His to begin with, especially things He says He hates. God redeems people and His creation, not pagan rituals, dates, or foreign methods of worship. In the end, this conversation was never about whether Christians love Jesus. It's never about motives. It's not about sincerity or whether God can be honored. And honestly, it's not even about whether or not specific items are rooted in paganism or not. The real question is far more precise. Who gets to define sacred time and by what authority? That's what we're talking about. We're not talking about objects ultimately. We're talking about time.

0:41:59 Scripture makes that answer unmistakably clear. God alone sanctifies time. God alone assigns meaning to worship. God alone determines how He's to be approached. Throughout the Bible, the issue is never intent. It's authorization. Holy days are not objects. Holy days are liturgy. They're acts of worship structured in time. And scripture never gives human beings permission to redefine sacred time simply because culture changes or memory fades, no more than a husband has the right to change the sacred time of his wedding anniversary without his wife's approval. And I can guarantee you he's not going to get it. God is a jealous God. That's why Jeroboam's feast was condemned in **First Kings 12**. That's why the Israelites' attempt at worshiping God through the golden calf was also strongly rejected. After all, He did say that our hearts are deceitfully wicked above all things. Trusting in our heart and how we feel may not exactly be the brightest idea. All of this does not make Christians evil if they decide to celebrate Christmas. It's not a salvation issue at all. And I'm not here to judge, and I encourage anybody that doesn't celebrate Christmas to not judge people that do. This is not about the person. It's about the method of worship. But it does mean that the practice itself cannot be justified biblically, historically, academically, archaeologically. It just doesn't hold water.

0:43:26 So, in the end, this comes down to a simple choice. Not between loving Jesus or rejecting Him. Not between tradition or rebellion, but between the tree of life and God's appointed times, God's definitions, God's ways, and the tree of

knowledge of good and evil, where good intentions mix with unauthorized worship. If there's only two trees in the garden, my friend, tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and only one of them is pure, unadulterated, God-given truth, and the other one is a mixture, which one do you think that Christmas would fall into? With all the intentions and the mixture of unauthorized worship, questionable items, unquestionable dates that are clearly former pagan sun god worship, I think the answer is clear.

0:44:19

Scripture allows pagan objects and names to lose meaning over time. That's without a doubt. But it never allows pagan holy days to be redefined by intent alone. Two trees, one choice. And that choice, my friend, still matters. I'm Jim Staley with Passion for Truth Ministries. I encourage you to look into this even more. Watch "[December 25th on Trial.](#)" Take a look at the real history behind Christmas, and in the end, serve God the way that He desires to be served. It's not about us, it's about Him. I'm Jim Staley with Passion for Truth Ministries. I'll see you in the next video.

## *Passion For Truth Ministries*

P.O. Box 365 ♦ 5323 Highway N  
Cottleville, MO 63338-9998  
Email: [info@passionfortruth.com](mailto:info@passionfortruth.com)  
♦ [www.passionfortruth.com](http://www.passionfortruth.com) ♦

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