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Digital praise Christian video-game players have more choices

By COLLEEN STEFFEN
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If you're a parent, chances are you don't want your child whacking prostitutes and spraying thugs with bullets -- even if it's only on the video-game screen.

Many Christian parents love the idea of video games not only not including sexual and violent images they disapprove of but also featuring messages they support -- messages based on biblical teachings.

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Lucky for them, Christian video games are getting easier and easier to find. For every Grand Theft Auto, there's a Catechumen, for every Doom, a Victory at Hebron. And they're being sold not just in Christian book stores and on the Web but increasingly in mainstream stores like Circuit City.

"People are hungry for it. They really want some nourishment," says Peter Fokos. He helped found Digital Praise, a Christian computer-game company based in Fremont, Calif., after spending 20 years as a programmer in the "secular" video-game industry.

His company's most popular game is Dance Praise -- basically a Dance Dance Revolution with Christian tunes. Hermie & Friends features a cast of cartoon bugs, and Solomon Says is a Bible trivia game.

Digital Praise is putting its 10th title out now, and sometimes the Christian messages are overt, sometimes more subtle, but always fun is put at the forefront of these kid-tested games.

Christian video games online

A sampling of Web sites offering games for sale -- for computers or video-game systems, for little kids or teens -- and a few of the titles they offer:

www.digitalpraise.com
Dance Praise
Adventures in Odyssey

www.guidinglightvideo.com
Charlie Church Mouse Bible Adventure
Bible Sports Games -- Baseball & Football

***www.christian-t-shirt.com**
The Interactive Parables
Victory at Hebron

www.n-lightning.com
Catechumen
Ominous Horizons

www.amazon.com
The War in Heaven
Hermie & Friends

Video-game reviews written from a Christian perspective



- www.christiananswers.net
- www.plaingames.com
- www.christian-life-advisor.com

"If the game isn't fun, no one's going to play it and get the message out of it," says Fokos. More games that can be played by groups of friends or families -- rather than in the isolation of a child's bedroom -- also have helped sales, which he reports are climbing steadily.

"I've seen of the reaction," he says. "That is really the future."

Contact assistant lifestyles editor Colleen Steffen at 213-5852.

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