



was introduced to the rest of the world in the mid-1990's. Its new version, Pokemon Go, is an augmented reality game, whereby players would chase Pokemon cartoon characters in real world environments using their smartphone camera and a phone app. There are biblical reasons why we should dissociate ourselves from this fantasy game.

Firstly, it is not all that innocuous as it is made out to be. Christian writers have warned about its troubling similarities with some occult practices. (By the way, "Pokemon" is short for "pocket monster"! ) Its hundreds of cartoon characters depict demonic creatures. One such creature even displays fictitious power to curse Pokemon players, thus inculcating in children that cursing through magic is alright. Though promoted as an amusement, in reality, it is a promoter of occultism, including clairvoyance, summoning of spirits, practice of mind-control, dabbling in magical arts, etc. The more immersed you are in the game, the more severe the spiritual maladies!

Secondly, there is much evidence that it affects the mood and behaviour of those given to it. Though there is

no official report of Pokemon players becoming demon-possessed or witchcraft practitioners, it can easily lead to these evil outcomes. Moreover, there have been media reports highlighting some thoughtless, dangerous behaviour of these gamers – even to the extent of causing near-road accidents and posing not a few physical dangers to others and themselves!

There is nothing wrong with having some fun using our imagination. But when it involves characters and activities of occult themes, our minds will be gradually influenced to ignore Scripture's prohibitions and be open to spiritual dangers. Due to its subtle power to negatively affect our behaviour and spiritual integrity, our children and youths must be dissuaded from playing Pokemon Go. What we need is not fun with the occult, but godly discipline that turns us from worldliness to Christ. Brethren, avoid all things that are not spiritually expedient. Indeed, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Corinthians 6:12)!

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***We should be cautious to avoid being enslaved by anything, even if it seems lawful. This is particularly true when it comes to our recreational pursuits.***

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