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**Mickey Gone Bad?**

Disney Tinkers with World's Most Famous Mouse

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**What Happened:**

Mickey Mouse is one of corporate America's most recognizable icons. His smile, his laugh and especially his ears are synonymous with the Walt Disney Company; and his image graces socks, shortbread and more than 7,500 other products.

During the last few decades, Mickey has been more a figurehead than a beloved character; now Disney cautiously is remolding the image of the iconic mouse—making him edgier in order to attract a new generation of fans.

First up: "Epic Mickey," a video game for Nintendo's Wii system, due to be released in the fall of 2010. Here, Mickey roams a nightmarish Disneyland, battling a robotic Donald Duck and a host of long-forgotten Disney characters, including Oswald the Rabbit, the 1920's precursor to Mickey.

As Mickey, gamers apparently will have a choice in how to navigate the game: Play nice and help others along the way, and Mickey stays much like his chipper self (and the game itself becomes lighter). On the other hand, if the gamer takes a darker road, the game gets darker, too—and Mickey himself slowly morphs into something more akin to a rat.

Warren Spector, creative director for Epic Mickey developer Junction Point, told *The New York Times*, "Ultimately, players must ask themselves, 'What kind of hero am I?'"

**Talk About It:**

"Epic Mickey" sounds like it's all about choices. What choices have you made that you're proud of? What choices do you feel bad about? What do the choices you make say about you as a person?

Mickey has long been cartoondom's ultimate good guy, but the new Mickey may be more reflective of the good-and-evil tug-of-war that takes place in all of us. Do you think it's a good thing for Disney to tinker with Mickey's image? Do you think you'll like him more?

Do we gravitate toward darker, more conflicted heroes these days? Why?

**What the Bible Says:**

“If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled, without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead’” (James 2:15-17).

“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Tim. 6:18-19).

“You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions” (Heb. 1:9).