

Local

CARP wants University recognition

By BELINDA McCOY
Battalion Staff
People call them "Moonies," and they are usually portrayed by the media as paupers-cum-monsters feeding on the innocent generosity of well-meaning America, torturing and enslaving stray youth who have wandered into their den.

Indeed the horror stories of Moon inspired several students in Japan in 1964 to establish CARP. His purpose was to create a campus organization to "revitalize the founding spirit of Judeo-Christianity," based on the Unification Principle — Moon's teachings.

brainwashed youth could probably fill books. Many of those stories may be true, but some students

at Texas A&M University who have met any of the Moonies living in Bryan might wonder how the picture ever got painted that color.

"Moonies" is a name given to members of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christians, or the Unification Church.

The Unification Church is a cult founded in Korea in the mid 1950s by Sun Myung Moon, more commonly known as Reverend Moon.

If anything, these followers of Moon, selling flowers on the street corners in Bryan and College Station, seem to be the antithesis of their stereotype.

"People get all these horror stories," said Ron Tewson, off-campus adviser of OASIS, a campus Christian organization opposing the Unification Church, "and then they meet one (a Moonie) and they (Moonies) are being polite and kind and loving, and they invite you over to dinner, and they give, and you say, 'Man, whoever wrote those articles was really off the wall,' so you discredit all of the media coverage."

But the people selling flowers are not necessarily members of the Unification Church — they are members of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), said Kim Dickinson, a local member of CARP and the Unification Church.

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Dickinson said there is no "direct affiliation" by CARP with the Unification Church. CARP's members are not required to be members of the Unification Church.

Dickinson said that five CARP members live together in Bryan

now. Sometimes, she said, that number climbs to ten.

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Now the organization is trying to add one more campus to that list.

Recently CARP presented a petition for recognition as a student organization to the student activities department at Texas A&M.

Even though the group has been in Bryan since last spring, said Dickinson, it is just now getting organized.

CARP may have trouble getting officially recognized on campus, though, because of "mechanical reasons," said Dr. Carolyn Adair, student activities director.

CARP submitted its second application for recognition to the student activities department. The first application was rejected by the department because CARP failed to meet certain requirements.

The second application is having some problems, too.

One of the requirements for a student organization on campus, Adair said, is that it "must show how this organization can be beneficial to the students (at A&M). There is not enough detail in the application. It is fuzzy as far as what they plan to do is concerned."

Before an organization can become recognized it must also have a faculty adviser, said Adair.

Roy Gilbert, associate professor of economics at Texas A&M has consented to be faculty adviser to CARP.

The organization is receiving another type of opposition, besides administrative opposition.

"There are some people who are prejudiced," said Dickinson. One of those groups opposing the recognition is OASIS.

"If people know who they really are, I don't think their chances are very good (for recognition)," said Tewson. "They oppose almost every major teaching of the Bible, and yet they call themselves Christians and that fakes a lot of people out."

Tewson has spent several years of self-study on the Unification Principle and recently lectured on the subject at an OASIS meeting.

The Unification Church



Photo by Margarita Jim

Kim Dickinson, a member of the Unification Church associated with the Rev. Moon, sells flowers on the corner of Villa Maria and Texas Avenue. Members of the church have been in town for the past month trying to strengthen their student organization CARP on the Texas A&M campus.

through CARP teaches that the Bible was written figuratively, not literally as Christians believe, said Tewson.

"They say the Bible is figurative, not to be taken literally ... The purpose of the Bible was to communicate truth, not to be obscure," said Tewson.

Dickinson defended the Unification Church's beliefs in a later interview.

"When the Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' I figure it's literal," explained Dickinson. "But when they say eating a fruit is a source of evil, I think it's a little deeper than just eating a piece of fruit."

Members of the Unification Church rely on the Divine Principle — a document written by Moon — for their interpretation of the Bible.

Tewson argued that not everything in the Divine Principle is supported by the Bible.

"The Divine Principle as a book is, in their words, the fullest explanation of the scripture," Tewson said. "It is an explanation, an interpretation of the Bible. They also admit — and I'm glad they do — that not everything in it is in the Bible and not everything in it is

supported by the Bible. They say that it is the most logical and reasonable explanation of the Bible."

Dickinson explained: "Nothing in the Divine Principle contradicts the Bible, but sometimes it's a deeper explanation based on the Bible and what the Bible is saying."

Moon teaches that Christ left his mission incomplete with his death, Tewson said.

"They believe his mission was to marry a perfect wife, and have perfect children, and create a perfect society, and that he failed by his death, Tewson said."

Dickinson said, "Jesus didn't fail, the people around him failed. They failed to believe in him and have faith in him. If they had believed in him, they wouldn't have killed him. There would have been no reason to kill him, because they would have loved him. You don't kill someone you love. After a while, it was obvious that that was the only thing he could do — sacrifice his life."

Tewson also said that the Unification Church denies the deity of Christ.

"They say Jesus was the son of God, not God," Tewson said.

Dickinson said that the Unification Church believes Jesus was the first person to ever be the image of God.

"In Genesis, it says we were created to be in the image of God. So all people were meant to be in the image of God. Jesus was the first person ever to be in the image of God, so in that way he's one with God. But he's the first person ever to be one with God, and we were all meant to be that way. Of course, Jesus is more extraordinary in that he was the first to ever be that way."

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