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WASHINGTON -- CLC, other groups announce boycott of RU-486 companies.  
VIRGINIA -- Brotherhood agrees to provide, train more overseas volunteers; photo.  
VIRGINIA -- 1993 Lottie Moon offering totals nearly \$83 million.  
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CLC, other groups announce  
boycott of RU-486 companies

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
6/2/94

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has joined with the National Right to Life Committee and four other organizations to promote a boycott of the companies which have made possible the introduction of the French abortion pill RU-486 into the United States.

The boycott will target the products of Roussel Uclaf, the French manufacturer of RU-486; Hoechst AG, the German parent company of Roussel Uclaf; and Hoechst Celanese and Hoechst Roussel, the German corporation's United States subsidiaries. A list of products to be boycotted will be announced in a few weeks, NRLC President Wanda Franz said at a June 1 news conference.

The other organizations announcing support for the boycott are Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, Christian Coalition and Family Research Council.

"Southern Baptists are consumers, and we will urge our members to enthusiastically support the boycott," said James A. Smith, the CLC's director of government relations said at the news conference.

"There will be pastors who will, yes, stand up in their pulpit and say, 'These companies are responsible for bringing the death pill into America, and they need to be held responsible for it, and you should boycott these products,'" Smith said in response to a question.

At the repeated urging of the Clinton administration, Roussel Uclaf recently donated its United States patent rights for mifepristone, commonly known as RU-486, to the Population Council Inc., a nonprofit corporation. The action cleared the way for the Population Council to pursue the manufacture, testing, licensing and marketing of the controversial pill in this country. RU-486 may be available for use in the United States by early 1996.

Roussel Uclaf, which has been lobbied fervently by both pro-life and pro-choice advocates in recent years, previously had refused to attempt introduction of the drug into this country because of the controversy.

"Hoechst AG and Roussel Uclaf may or may not be able to escape the legal responsibility by giving the patent away, but they cannot escape the moral responsibility for what will ensue," NRLC's Franz said.

Smith said, "The fact that these companies will not be directly marketing and selling RU-486 is little comfort to the millions of unborn children who will die because Hoechst and Roussel Uclaf caved in to pressure from the Clinton administration."

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Boycott supporters not only criticized the Clinton administration for its part in promoting a new abortion technique but for RU-486's potential impact on women. Critics of RU-486 have charged it is unsafe sometimes for women.

"At a time when one in five couples are infertile, and when women are still struggling to come to grips with the failures of breast implants, the Dalkon Shield and even the infertility of those women who first started taking the pill, why is our president advocating that women's bodies once again be molded in the shape of his world view?" said Kristi Hamrick of the Family Research Council in a written statement. "Even in foreign policy, abortion seems the only agenda President Clinton is fully committed to."

While Clinton has said he desires for abortion to be "safe and legal, but rare," Smith said, "RU-486 fails on all three stated goals of the president's abortion policy."

After the 1992 election, CLC Executive Director Richard Land warned Hoechst AG in a letter the CLC would hold Hoechst and Roussel Uclaf responsible if RU-486 were marketed in this country.

"If that happens, we will conduct a massive campaign to make all our constituencies aware of this responsibility and of the ways in which they might elect to use their purchasing choices in the commercial marketplace to make their displeasure known," Land wrote.

He also told the German company Clinton's election was not an affirmation of the Democrat's pro-choice abortion position. Hoechst's criteria of "acceptability (of abortion) by general and political society" for introduction of RU-486 into a country had not been met, Land said.

In 1990, Land traveled to Germany and France with a delegation led by NRLC to discourage company officials from attempting to introduce the pill into the United States.

RU-486 can be used only through the seventh week of pregnancy. The procedure requires several visits to a medical facility; the use of two different drugs and close monitoring of the participants for complications.

More than 150,000 women have used RU-486 as an abortifacient in Europe. While RU-486 is being studied for other uses, it has been marketed as an abortion drug in France, Great Britain and Sweden.

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Brotherhood agrees to provide,  
train more overseas volunteers

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
6/2/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--With interest in volunteerism soaring, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is asking the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission to be a primary recruiter for its overseas volunteer force.

An agreement signed June 1 by the two agencies' presidents spells out the Foreign Mission Board as the sending agency for its projects but calls on the Brotherhood Commission to help overseas missionaries achieve their strategic aims by finding and training the right volunteers.

"This agreement clearly illustrates how Southern Baptist Convention agencies can work together to accomplish our Great Commission global strategies," said James Williams, president of the Brotherhood Commission, a national SBC agency for missions education and involvement based in Memphis, Tenn.

The agreement signals a significant shift in Brotherhood involvement in recruiting for Foreign Mission Board volunteer projects. Last year most Brotherhood volunteers who served overseas were recruited through state convention partnerships with the Foreign Mission Board. The new agreement will operate on a separate track from partnerships with state conventions.

The agreement gives a more active role to the Brotherhood Commission for recruiting and training volunteers for the large number of projects not related to state partnerships -- and, more importantly, places a heavier burden on the Brotherhood to produce volunteers.

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During the next year the commission plans to recruit and train an additional 3,000 to 3,500 volunteers, said Russell Griffin, assistant vice president for program services at the commission.

"As Southern Baptists, we've got to multiply the efforts of our career missionary force," said Jim Furgerson, director of the Foreign Mission Board's volunteers in missions department. "The use of quality volunteers is one way we can do it."

In the future, the Brotherhood's total contribution could mean 8,000 or more trained and qualified volunteers a year as missionaries continue to request increasing numbers of them, said Furgerson, who directed the adult division at the Brotherhood Commission before joining the Foreign Mission Board staff last year.

Foreign Mission Board volunteer enlists are running at top load already, he said.

"We want to have 100,000 volunteers who have served on the foreign mission field between now and the year 2000," Furgerson added. "We feel this is vital to penetrate every people group in the world."

Last year Foreign Mission Board enlists worked through local Brotherhood units and other organizations to recruit about 7,200 of the 12,000 volunteers who worked overseas. Others were recruited by state Baptist conventions to participate in ongoing partnerships with overseas conventions. Enlists anticipate a day not too distant when they will need to fill 20,000 or more requests a year.

"We're grateful for the empowerment this gives us -- thank you," said Williams just after signing the document. Earlier he had stressed that the Brotherhood Commission's purpose of educating Southern Baptists about missions has often been best fulfilled on the field.

"We see some of the best education we provide Southern Baptists coming while they're doing missions," he said. "This is a unique way for volunteers who want to do missions to learn about Southern Baptist foreign missions and field strategy."

Already, the board works with state Baptist conventions to plan multifaceted partnership mission projects. These account for 40 to 50 percent of the volunteer force. The agreement with the Brotherhood will not minimize this, FMB President Jerry Rankin stressed.

Williams expects to create up to three new positions and rearrange his staff to handle the increased recruiting load on the Brotherhood, and be ready to begin using the new guidelines by Aug. 1. The new positions will be responsible not only for recruiting, but also for working with the Foreign Mission Board in preparing volunteers for the field.

"We appreciate all the Brotherhood Commission has done in partnership with us, and we have always felt a real solid commitment from you," Rankin told Williams and other high-level staff members from the Brotherhood before signing the document. "But this enhances the relationship to an altogether new level of cooperation."

"I feel like we're setting a precedent for all our agencies to work together with a common mission focus," Rankin added.

The agreement emerged through discussions primarily between Furgerson and Griffin. Furgerson came to the board in December after working with the Brotherhood since 1989. In introducing him to trustees, Rankin outlined his own vision to "enlarge the channels of opportunity" for volunteers globally.

"We want to use every resource we can to expand the use of quality volunteers," Furgerson said. "This is imperative not only for the effect they have on the field, but to cause foreign missions to live in the hearts and lives of every Southern Baptist."

Volunteers who have returned from the field are some of foreign missions' best advocates, speaking at churches and often becoming missions enthusiasts in their local churches.

"I'm grateful that volunteers' work on the field can now be seen not just as an FMB strategy or a Brotherhood commitment, but as the SBC together responding to the needs of the world," Williams said.

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(BP) photo to be mailed June 3 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outline will be available then on SBCNet Newsroom.

1993 Lottie Moon offering  
totals nearly \$83 million

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists gave a record \$82,899,291 to the 1993 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

The final total, tallied after books on the offering closed May 31, represented a 2.37 percent increase -- or \$1.9 million -- over the 1992 figure of \$80.9 million. Receipts missed the \$85 million goal but topped the previous record, set in 1991, by more than \$1.5 million.

The increase encouraged Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board leaders in light of the fact the 1992 and 1990 offerings were below the previous years' totals.

"I'm ecstatic," said FMB President Jerry Rankin. Despite disagreements among Southern Baptists, the offering "affirms that we're still focused on missions and that Southern Baptists are confident in what God is doing through our Foreign Mission Board," he said.

"It will encourage missionaries, because they get all kinds of messages about what's going on in the convention, and some of them are feeling very insecure in terms of finances," he added. "It doesn't represent a windfall, but it does ensure that we'll be able to meet their budgets this year."

In recent years Southern Baptist foreign missionaries -- who recently surpassed 4,000 for the first time -- have increasingly depended upon Lottie Moon gifts for basic support. This year the offering was budgeted to underwrite about 45 percent of the mission board's total \$185 million budget. Southern Baptists' unified giving plan, the Cooperative Program, was to provide 37 percent.

Thanks to the upturn in giving, Lottie Moon funds also will provide about \$1.9 million of the board's \$8 million capital budget for such things as new construction, equipment and vehicles for missionaries. Additional capital funds will come from other sources.

The \$1.9 million is a modest amount when divided among mission stations in more than 100 countries. "But it's a lot better than nothing," which is what missionaries received in Lottie Moon capital funds last year, noted FMB finance vice president Carl Johnson.

The goal for the upcoming 1994 Christmas offering is \$86 million.

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Southern Seminary celebrates  
century of doctoral study

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press  
6/2/94

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--When Southern Baptist Theological Seminary began its doctoral program a century ago, it treaded into territory where no other seminary had dared to go.

In 1894, the Louisville, Ky., school became the first free-standing seminary in America to grant doctoral degrees in theology. That year Southern awarded doctor of theology degrees to four graduates -- Weston Bruner, Grant S. Housch, Thomas Stafford and Dexter Whittinghill.

Previously, only universities had offered doctoral degrees in religion. Southern followed programs that had been established at Boston University, Hebrew Union College, Harvard, Yale and Columbia. Just 32 doctorates in religion had been awarded in America prior to 1894. Over the past century, Southern alone has conferred approximately 2,400 doctoral degrees.

William L. Hendricks, the seminary's director of doctoral studies, noted doctoral graduates helped establish the school's role as "mother seminary" for the other five Southern Baptist Convention seminaries. In fact, the first presidents of four of the other five seminaries were doctoral graduates of Southern. They include 1900 graduate Byron H. DeMent (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary), 1932 graduate Sydnor L. Stealey (Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary), 1941 graduate Harold K. Graves (Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary) and 1942 graduate J. Millard B. Riquist (Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary).

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Yet the impact of the doctoral program has gone beyond Southern Baptist life. "Southern Seminary has made significant contributions to theological education around the world," Hendricks said. "Our graduates have been worldwide in the scope of their ministries, and the ecumenical impact of Southern graduates, who were from other religious traditions, has been noteworthy."

Perhaps the most heralded plaudit of the doctoral program's history came during the 1970s when a study conducted by the American Council of Learned Societies ranked Southern among the top 16 places for doctoral studies in religion. Even with the high ranking, Southern soon took major steps to further strengthen its doctoral degrees, said W. Morgan Patterson, who then directed the doctoral program. The seminary began requiring students in research doctoral programs to take some course work in a university setting and to submit their dissertations for critique by a professor outside the seminary. Southern also started offering courses to prepare college teachers and began allowing doctoral students to teach some seminary courses.

"This doctoral program has been regarded as an excellent one for a hundred years not just because of the quality of the graduates, but because of the eminent scholars on the faculty," Patterson emphasized.

Over the years, the nomenclature of the degrees offered at Southern has varied. The seminary shifted from offering the Th.D. to a Ph.D. in 1928, and then reverted to the Th.D. from 1939-74. Since 1974, the seminary's primary research doctorate in theology has been the Ph.D.

In the past 35 years, Southern has added doctoral study in church music and Christian education. Southern was among the first three seminaries in the nation to establish a fully accredited doctorate in music, said Forrest Heeren, retired dean of the school of church music. Southern's first doctorate in church music was awarded in 1962. "I think we have helped make church music respected in NASM (the National Association of Schools of Music)," said Heeren. Doctoral graduates are now teaching in colleges, universities and seminaries as well as serving on staffs of large churches, he adds. The degree, which was initially called the doctor of church music (D.C.M.), became the doctor of musical arts (D.M.A.) in 1979.

Southern's first doctorate in Christian education was given in 1960. Many of the early graduates put their advanced study in education to work at the Baptist Sunday School Board, according to Findley Edge, emeritus professor of Christian education at Southern. Southern graduates have continued to exercise influence there as well as in teaching and on staffs of churches, Edge observed.

"I think the education degree helped give both stature and foundation to the whole field of Christian education," said Edge, adding Southern's education degree always has had a strong theological emphasis. The seminary initially awarded a doctor of religious education degree (D.R.E.), but the name was changed to doctor of education (Ed.D.) in 1971.

In 1973, Southern began granting the doctor of ministry degree (D.Min.), a professional doctorate for people engaged in full-time ministry. The seminary in 1987 conferred the nation's first doctor of music ministry degree (D.M.M.), a professional doctorate for church musicians.

Southern's heritage of innovation in advanced study is continuing. The Carver School of Church Social Work is studying the feasibility of offering a Ph.D. in social work. Doctoral study in social work is offered by only a handful of universities and no seminaries.

Meanwhile, the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth is studying the development of a doctor of missiology degree (D.Miss.). This would be the first such program offered by a Southern Baptist seminary.

"As needs arise to broaden our doctoral offerings, we will strive for the same kind of excellence that has marked Southern Seminary's doctoral program for a century," said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr.

**Brothers devote 60 years  
to ministry in Connecticut**

**By Dan Nicholas**

GROTON, Conn. (BP)--When Jim Schneider announced he was moving from Missouri to Connecticut to become pastor of a Southern Baptist church, his grandmother thought it was "the worst thing in the world."

"God is not going to leave you there for more than two years," Schneider recalls her predicting. But how wrong she was.

Schneider has served as pastor of Pleasant Valley Baptist Church in Groton, Conn., since 1961 and is the longest-serving pastor in the history of New England Southern Baptists.

Schneider's older brother, Jack, has been pastor of the nearby Baptist Fellowship of Columbia, Conn., since 1966. Together the two men have served an impressive combined total of 60 years as New England pastors.

Because of their large stature -- Jim is 6'5" -- and outgoing personalities, some have called the Schneider brothers "James and John, the sons of thunder," after the biblical personalities of the same name.

Jack is quick to point out in response that his name is not a nickname for John. "It's just Jack," he insists.

When Jim first visited Connecticut in July 1961, he and his wife, Louise, were on their honeymoon. The St. Louis native had just completed studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

He thought of ministry in the Northeast after talking with a seminary friend who was a pastor in New York state. When a missions group in New London, Conn., called Jim as their pastor, he decided to accept it.

"No one was dying to come to a situation like that. It was not an ideal situation," he reflects. When Jim moved to Connecticut, there were only three Southern Baptist pastors in the six-state New England region.

"I thought I'd stay a couple of years and then get a real church in Missouri," he says. But God had a different idea.

When Jim started as pastor, there were just 22 people.

The Groton-New London area, known as the submarine capital of the world, has had a Christian influence from Jim's faithful service. Currently, nearly 500 people attend either of two uplifting non-traditional Sunday services.

If all of the former members were still present, Pleasant Valley Baptist could now count more than 5,000 members. Many were transferred from the area by the military or employers.

Thirty years ago, 98 percent of the members were military families; today, at a time when the federal defense budget is being slashed, military families comprise just 30 percent of the church membership.

The church has been a New England leader in number of baptisms. "We keep water in the baptismal at all times," Jim notes.

"If people know us, they think of us as a church with an outreach in the community," he says.

They operate a soup kitchen that feeds 300 people, a food shelf that assists 400 families and a Bible study at a women's correctional facility.

Jim also wants to minister at a casino opened by Native Americans.

In addition to the community outreach, three churches in other cities have developed from Pleasant View's ministry. Also, 50 former members have become pastors or career ministry workers as a result of the Groton congregation.

The Schneiders' son Jimmy, for instance, is pastor of a growing Southern Baptist congregation in Rutland, Vt.

Jim's early hope of moving on to a Missouri church was never realized. "There were more important things to worry about here (in New England). There are so many lost people," he says, noting he wanted to face "the challenge of the area."

"I would not take anything in exchange for what the Lord has done here," he explains.

"Eldest son of Dr. C.M. Rock, first pastor of the church and linchpin of the whole effort to organize the Baptist General Convention of Arizona in 1928, the younger Rock came as close to being an indispensable man for the young convention as one human could ever be," "A History of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention" records. "His love and dedication to Christ, his church, and the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, were beyond question."

Under the younger Rock's ministry, First Southern in Phoenix grew from 614 members to more than 2,000 and funded four major building programs. At the same time, the church was responsible for starting at least 20 other churches.

"To begin missions, you have to be willing to give up members," said Rock in a 1973 interview. His favorite technique was to call in a group of church members from a certain community and ask them to help begin a new work in that area.

As those new missions became churches and started their own missions, First Southern's family tree grew to more than 100 churches.

Rock was active in denominational life, both on a national and state level.

He served as a member of the SBC Executive Committee and as a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and the Home Mission Board. He was nominated for president and vice president of the SBC in 1959.

In Arizona, Rock served as president of the Baptist General Convention of Arizona (now Arizona Southern Baptist Convention) for four terms, 1936-37 and 1942-43.

Born in North Carolina, Rock moved to Arizona when he was 12. He graduated from Phoenix College and the University of Arizona and attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He received an honorary doctorate from Grand Canyon University in 1965.

Before assuming the pastorate in Phoenix, Rock was pastor of churches in Louisiana and Texas.

Survivors include his wife, Kathleen; daughter Carol Jean Osterkorn; son James Vaughan, a pastor in North Carolina; sisters Dixie Julian and Alma Stagg, wife of Harry P. Stagg, executive director emeritus of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico; three grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Services were held May 31 at First Southern Baptist Church of Phoenix.

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Baptist medical students  
not deterred by AIDS threat

By Daniel McCrosky

Baptist Press  
6/2/94

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--The workplace abounds with hazardous jobs: most construction work, most jobs working with machinery, any type of employment working with electricity. Now, with the outbreak of AIDS, you can add being a doctor.

But the AIDS virus has not deterred three Southern Baptist medical students. Even though they are, as they say, "a needle prick away from certain death," they v iced determination in a group interview to follow what they feel is God's sovereign call.

"I really enjoy dentistry and I really love Jesus, so really there wasn't any question I was going to be a dentist after I prayed about it and felt God had called me to this profession," said Rob Wilson, a third-year dental student at the University of Tennessee Medical School in Memphis. "I completely understand the risk to my life and my family's life because of AIDS, and all I can say is God is in control."

Wilson's roommate, Chris Coleman, said he feels the same way. "Because Jesus saved me I want to be completely obedient to whatever he wants me to do," said the fourth-year dental student from Chattanooga, Tenn. "I would prefer not to work on AIDS-infected people but I really don't hav a ch ice.

"It is against the law not to treat medically a person just because they have AIDS," said Coleman. "But the reality of it is you have to treat everybody, including people with AIDS, no matter how they got it. And so you just have to be real careful with every single patient you work on."

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Jack Schneider's path to the Northeast was somewhat different from his brother's. He first visited Connecticut to preach a revival at Jim's church. In those days, Jack says, he was a "happy pastor" in Missouri.

A school teacher in the Columbia, Conn., area who was leading a Bible study group decided Jack was the right person to become pastor of their tiny flock.

Jack said he was not interested.

Months later, Jack received a letter that was signed by 16 members of the Columbia Bible study group. They were officially calling him as their pastor.

Jack was upset.

Suddenly, as he turned away their call, Jack came down with a case of hives that lasted eight days. During this period, Jack prayed for God to "open a door so I can't close it, and I'll go."

At about the same time, a Connecticut man unexpectedly showed up at Jack's home with a U-Haul truck to "pick up your stuff." The group already had rented Jack an apartment.

Sensing God's call, he agreed to move. Suddenly, the hives disappeared.

Missouri didn't have the same challenge Jack found in New England, he says: "In Connecticut, there are thousands of lost people.

"Seeing people come to Christ is the No. 1 excitement of my ministry. I feel there is nothing you can do as important as reaching and helping others grow in Christ."

Jack is "praying that God would show me a vision for the future. One thing we must do is reach out in the local community for Christ."

When the congregation was forming, Jack looked around at some of the churches in Columbia and concluded, "If that's what a church is, we're not going to be one." That's why the group still is called a "fellowship."

Most of Columbia's 300 attenders are New England natives. Unlike Jim, Jack never had a military base from which to attract members. Eighteen members were present when the church was chartered in 1969.

One of the Schneider brothers' secrets for growing a healthy and stable church is longevity. "Preacher, put your mailbox in cement," Jack says, quoting popular Christian author Warren Wiersbe.

"I plan to stay here until I die. There's no retirement for me," he adds.

When Jim and Jack's parents prayed many years ago "God would use our boys," they may not have imagined the lengthy and profound impact that their sons would make in Connecticut.

But, surely, God has answered their prayers.

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Nicholas is news editor for the New England Baptist.

Vaughan Rock, dead at 88,  
was Baptist pioneer in West

Baptist Press  
6/2/94

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--C. Vaughan Rock, a pioneer of Southern Baptist work in the West, died May 29. He was 88.

Rock was one of the leading proponents for locating Southern Baptists' western conference center in New Mexico. As a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Western Assembly Committee, Rock joined another committee member in presenting a minority report at the SBC annual meeting in 1949 that led to Glorieta, N.M., being chosen over a site in Arkansas.

Two plaques honoring Rock's efforts were unveiled at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center last year.

Rock was pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Phoenix for 37 years until his retirement in 1973. He assumed the pastorate of the church in 1936 after the death of his father, C.M. Rock, who founded the church -- the first Southern Baptist church in Arizona -- in 1921.

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"We are first and foremost called to serve God," said first-year medical student Don Price from Lebanon, Tenn. "It just so happens that we feel our Lord has called us into this profession and so we follow wherever he wants to lead us.

"The real hard part about this," Price said, "is getting a bad attitude toward the person because they have AIDS and because of their immoral lifestyle they are subjecting you and your family to unnecessary danger.

"I believe God is calling me to be a medical doctor, probably a surgeon and so I completely understand the risk because, chances are, I will be working with AIDS-tainted blood all the time," he continued. "It is my job to show God's love and compassion to all of my patients and not just the ones I prefer because Jesus loves them all."

"That's true," Coleman said. "Jesus loves them all and, being a dentist, I have a real captive audience. Once I get them in the chair, they are not going anywhere so I am able to share Jesus with them."

The question most Christian medical students must answer is the tension of loving the sinner and hating the sin. For the three medical students their faith leads them through those tough times.

"I really struggle with it," the 23-year-old Price said. "It is, for the most part, a totally behavior-related disease. I know that a lot of people get AIDS who are not homosexual, but the truth of the matter is a great majority of the people who get AIDS get it through a sinful lifestyle, homosexual or heterosexual.

"What is frustrating to me is to know that God has the cure for AIDS, and our government seems to be willing to educate people in everything but what God says," Price said. "True Love Waits is a terrific program. As a doctor, I can try to get the truth out about AIDS. It is a dangerous disease but if a person follows God's intended plan -- don't do drugs, don't live a homosexual lifestyle, don't have sex outside of marriage -- then the chance of your ever getting AIDS is almost nothing."

The 25-year-old Coleman recounted recently working on an AIDS-infected patient.

"Just the other day I was working on the teeth I thought was of a woman because of the way that person was dressed and the makeup and everything," Coleman said. "But it was a homosexual man with AIDS. That is when I feel anger and the tension of being a Christian in today's world because here was a person risking my life and boasting in his sin. I really felt a small part of God's hatred for sin.

"I have had AIDS-tainted blood on my hands before," he said. "I don't want to try to be super-dentist or anything, because it is what God has called me to do and all three of us want to be at least volunteer missionaries when we get our own practice.

"God is in control, to be sure, and I am going to be careful," Coleman said, "and so you just have to trust him and try to treat everyone the same."

"AIDS is a reality in today's society and I don't ever see them finding a cure," said Wilson. "You don't really try to think about it but it is out there and somewhere, somehow all three of us desire that God will be glorified in what we do for him. There is a saying we like to say: They came in to see a doctor but they heard about Jesus, the real Great Physician."

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McCrosky is a free-lance writer in Arlington, Ky., and pastor of First Baptist Church there.

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