

When Bucks Fly

by R.C. Sproul, Jr.

My friends the McDonalds are trying to get out their new magazine. It's a great idea, a great concept, and a great honor for me to have the opportunity to be a part of it. But it's also a problem. As I write, the magazine I edit, *Every Thought Captive*, is at least a month late.

It's a good thing, being an editor. While it is not unusual for editors to have the opportunity to write, editors nearly always have authority, power. In my many years as an editor, however, I have only had to pull rank once. I decided that we should have a completely black cover, with our masthead and a title in tiny print in a deep shade of grey. The art director didn't like the idea—too stark. After much peaceful discussion back and forth, and a brief foray into less-than-peaceful discussion, I directed him to page three and

ness. Everyone agreed on the cover image: a dove flying away from its cage. Everyone agreed on the title as well: "You are forgiven," written in Latin. I told the associate editor that I thought it was *Te Absolvum*, and asked that he check with our Latin expert. He didn't, and in case you're no Latin scholar, it should have been *Te Absolvo*. The cover produced under my authority had a misspelling in the title.

Authority is like that. Everything seems all grand and glorious as others look to you for direction. But the problem is that when something goes wrong—and something always does—it's your fault. When those few Latin scholars that read that magazine called



The Bible itself demonstrates that as husbands and fathers, on the earthly plane, our names are on the top of the masthead. Ephesians 5:22 instructs wives to submit to their own husbands as to the Lord. Just a few short verses later children are told that they must obey their parents in the Lord.

We have the authority, and when it is convenient for us, we exercise it. As one of my little girls puts it, "Daddy gets the big pork chop." In the daddy club, membership has its privileges. But we are not averse to trying to slide under the responsibility that comes with the job. We are of our father Adam, who upon being confronted for his sin, managed a double desperation move, first blaming Eve—it was "the woman"—and then, just to drive his foot deeper into his mouth, blaming God—"whom Thou gavest to be with me" (Genesis 3:12, KJV). We walk into church late and subtly shrug our shoulders, communicating

Welcome to being the husband and father, where everything in your home really is your fault.

told him to find his name in the masthead. "Now, look above that, and what do you see?" "Your name" he reluctantly conceded. "Do the black cover," I told him. (For whatever it is worth, that cover went on to win a design award.)

Later, we prepared another cover for an issue on the theme of forgive-

to grouse or to laugh at my expense, I wasn't able to say, "It was my associate editor" for the very same reason that I was able, with the other cover, to tell the art director to do what I wanted. You can't have power without responsibility.

Of course, this doesn't keep us from trying, especially in our homes.

to our brothers in the pews, "You know, with the wife and the makeup and the kids not finding their shoes, what could I do?" And all the men nod silently in understanding.

We are confused in our age about servant leadership. The phrase has a nice ring to it, but too often servant swallows up leadership. Because we live in an egalitarian age, we are reluctant to actually lead, lest we be accused of "lording it over" those we lead. And so we become spineless evanjellyfish to preserve our status as servants.

Of course there is such a thing as lording it over those over whom we have been given authority. What indicates misuse of this authority, however, is not leadership, but the end

for which the leadership is exercised. God didn't put husbands and fathers in charge of their homes so they might be more comfortable, so they might get the big pork chop. We lord it over others when we choose and impose our way for our own benefit.

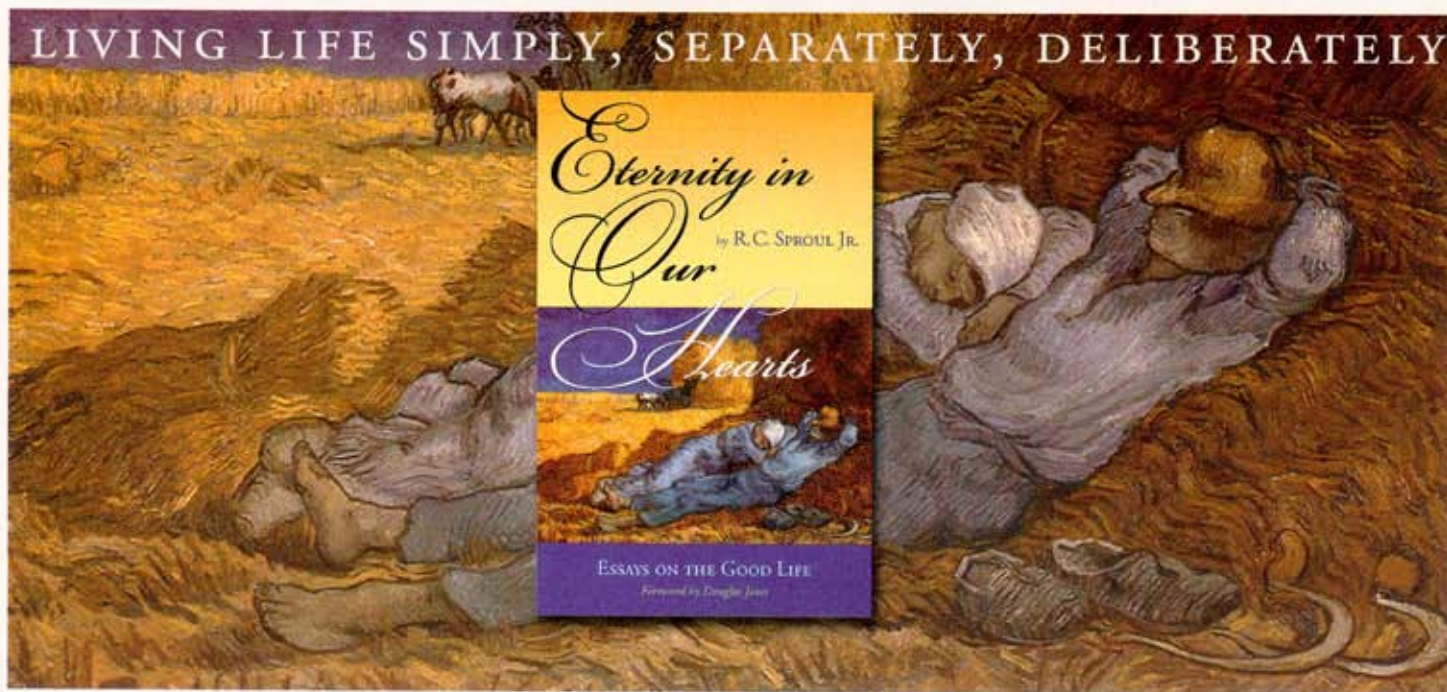
We serve, however, not when we roll over and refuse to lead, but when we lead by accepting responsibility for our decisions. And in our homes, all the decisions are ours. The buck always stops with us. Did your wife spend the month's grocery money on new curtains? That's your fault, for while you can delegate the chore of grocery buying, you cannot delegate the responsibility. Did your wife insist that the way to your son's ball game was to the right, when you thought it was to the

left? And did you accede to her theory, only to get lost? That's your fault too. Did you finally arrive at the ball game just to see your son screaming at the umpire that he was deficient in his eyesight? Yup, that's you too. Welcome to being the husband and father, where everything in your home really is your fault.

Success does not make the man, even when he seeks a scriptural success. Instead, a true man takes responsibility for his failures. This may be why a godly man's best posture is on his knees, repenting. **FR**

Dr. R.C. Sproul Jr. is the editor-in-chief of *Tabletalk* magazine and the director of the Highlands Study Center in Meadowview, Virginia.

LIVING LIFE SIMPLY, SEPARATELY, DELIBERATELY



Eternity in Our Hearts
by R.C. SPROUL JR.
Essays on the Good Life
Foreword by Douglas James

"Helping Christians to live simple, separate, and deliberate lives to the glory of God and for the building of His kingdom." That's the motto of the Highlands Study Center, the teaching ministry of Dr. R.C. Sproul Jr. As part of its work, the Center produces books, audio Bible studies, recorded conversations, and a free bimonthly magazine.

DRAUGHT HORSE PRESS is privileged to publish and distribute these materials. Contact us to learn more about *Eternity in Our Hearts* (160pp, \$15), Dr. Sproul's guidebook to living the good life. And we would be glad to send a free sample packet, which includes a catalog, an issue of the magazine *Every Thought Captive*, and an audio CD with excerpts from the recordings we sell.

DRAUGHT HORSE PRESS
1-877-244-5184
www.draughthorsepress.com
Ask us to send a free catalog