

Week 47—Confession

Read

Charles Robertson should have turned himself in. Not that he would've been acquitted; he robbed a bank. But at least he wouldn't have been the laughingstock of Virginia Beach.

Cash-strapped Robertson, nineteen, went to Jefferson State Bank on a Wednesday afternoon, filled out a loan application, and left. Apparently he changed his mind about the loan and opted for a quicker plan. He returned within a couple of hours with a pistol, a bag, and a note demanding money. The teller complied, and all of a sudden Robertson was holding a sack of loot.

Figuring the police were fast on their way, he dashed out the front door. He was halfway to the car when he realized he'd left the note. Fearing it could be used as evidence against him, he ran back into the bank and snatched it from the teller. Now holding the note and the money, he ran a block to his parked car. That's when he realized he'd left his keys on the counter when he'd returned for the note.

"At this point," one detective chuckled, "total panic set in."

Robertson ducked into the restroom of a fast-food restaurant. He dislodged a ceiling tile and hid the money and the .25 caliber handgun. Scampering through alleys and creeping behind cars, he finally reached his apartment where his roommate, who knew nothing of the robbery, greeted him with the words, "I need my car."

You see, Robertson's getaway vehicle was a loaner. Rather than confess to the crime and admit the bungle, Robertson shoveled yet another spade of dirt deeper in the hole. "Uh, uh, your car was stolen," he lied.

While Robertson watched in panic, the roommate called the police to inform them of the stolen vehicle. About twenty minutes later an officer spotted the "stolen" car a block from the recently robbed bank. Word was already on the police radio that the robber had forgotten his keys. The officer put two and two together and tried the keys on the car. They worked.

Detectives went to the address of the person who'd reported the missing car. There they found Robertson. He confessed, was charged with robbery, and put in jail. No bail. No loan. No kidding.

Some days it's hard to do anything right. It's even harder to do anything *wrong* right. Robertson's not alone. We've done the same. Perhaps we didn't take money but we've taken advantage or taken control or taken leave of our senses and then, like the thief, we've taken off. Dashing down the alleys of deceit. Hiding behind buildings of work to be done or deadlines to be met. Though we try to act normal, anyone who looks closely at us can see we are on the lam: Eyes darting and hands fidgeting, we chatter nervously. Committed to the cover-up, we scheme and squirm, changing the topic and changing direction. We don't want anyone to know the truth, especially God.¹

Reflect

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Return to Him from whom you have deeply defected, O sons of Israel. (Isaiah 31:6)

Respond

“Confession” is the act of agreeing with God when you have sinned (and sometimes agreeing with others against whom who have sinned)—agreeing with Him that we have done wrong, being honest with our guilt and laying our shame before His feet. Too many people try to redeem themselves from bad choices which leads to more bad choices, but consider the power of confession: Not only does the Bible show the greatness of God’s forgiveness and restoration but James wrote, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

Write your thoughts here:

Prayer Requests for yourself, your students, and others with whom you serve in ministry:

¹Max Lucado. *In the Grip of Grace*, (Dallas: Word, 1996), p. 120-122.