

**Easter Rewind Series**  
**Towards Togetherness Part Two**  
**5/25/24**  
**Newport News**

**Opening**

-explain series

**Introduction**

**-(show time line slide)**

*-So in light of all these messages, the season of Easter...where do we go from here?*

The call of Christ hasn't expired! It's ancient but it's not old!

-Where do we go from here? **Towards Togetherness.**

-Ephesians 3:14-19

- "...all of this..." refers to diverse communities worshipping together
- meaning, being rooted and established in love isn't just referring to us with God but us with each other!
- Experience vs. Understanding (re-read vs. 19)

-So let's talk about how we move towards togetherness (rooted and established in love)...

- 1. When we love one another relentlessly**
- 2. When we love one another sacrificially**
- 3. When we love one another forgivingly**

**Forgivingly**

**-Ephesians 4:32**

-(use Church History in Plain language idea from persecution ending)

*-Can you imagine the grace that would have been required to forgive those families? The courage that was required to move forward again in covenant relationships with each other? But they did...and we know they did because here we are 2000 years later and Christianity is thriving all around the world!*

**-We are moving towards togetherness, rooted and established in love, when we love one another forgivingly.**

-but I want to pivot here for the rest of our time together...as I was praying and preparing for this message, I felt the Holy Spirit say to me:

*"One of the reasons church communities fail to operate in forgiveness collectively is because they fail to operate in forgiveness individually."*

Then as I was praying He said this to me:

*"People are not ready to do the hard work of mending relationships with others because they have not done the hard work of mending themselves!"*

## The Lost Sheep

**-Luke 15:3-7**

- the lost sheep is the part of you that wanders...
- the 99 are the parts of you that stay to your Jesus centered values
- the man is still Jesus but you should envision yourself with Him...
- his friends represent the assumption that you have meaningful Christian relationships
- celebration: sharing our faults and forgiveness
- (explain secretive vs. private vs. public)

-Questions to ask yourself?

- 1. Do I have secrets about myself I hope no one will ever know?**
- 2. Do different friend circles know me differently?**
- 3. What behaviors are incongruent with my value system?**

**-Personal forgiveness necessitates a rigorous process of self-reflection that leads to confession, resolve to change, and accountability.** (justification, permissiveness, denial)

-1 John 1:9 (quote)

## **Band**

-Steps

- 1. Ask Jesus to help you identify everything in your life that is "lost."**
- 2. Ask Jesus to help you find the courage to bring that area of your life in alignment with your value system.**
- 3. Ask Jesus to help you identify a few friends you can confide in.**

**Close**