



The Secret To Freedom | Ethan Matott | 4.11-4.12
Weekly Study

S H A R E

Welcome, Red Rocks, to our new sermon series, *“Free Me From Me.”* Over the past couple of years, Ryan has been developing this idea of what the “me-maze” looks like in our lives as Christians. The me-maze is a self-centered labyrinth that leads ever inward, making it difficult to see or care about anyone beyond ourselves. This series is all about how we break free from that cycle and put God back at the center of our lives. While the modern world tells us that life is all about us, Jesus offers a radically different invitation—one of loving and serving others.

In week one, Ethan shared a message called *“The Secret to Freedom.”* The heart of that message is simple: *life isn’t all about you—and it’s better that way.* When we live in the me-maze, we often end up confused, lost, and insecure. But when we walk with God at the center, we can live with confidence, trusting that He is able to do what we cannot. The me-maze pressures us to prove ourselves, but Jesus calls us to live with purpose. In Matthew 11:28–30, Jesus invites those who are weary and burdened to come to Him and find true rest.

- Can you share a “but Jesus” moment where your life shifted from your way to God’s way?**
- What are the things that most often draw you into the me-maze, and what practices help you refocus on God?**

G R O W

Read John 7:1-13

At the end of John 6, we see many of Jesus's followers turn away from Him because of a difficult teaching. As humans, rejection often leaves us feeling vulnerable and insecure, causing us to look for ways to prove ourselves or regain approval. But when Jesus was rejected, He remained faithful to the mission He was carrying out.

In John 7, we see Him continue to move with intention and purpose. His brothers urged Him to step into the spotlight and become the kind of public figure they expected Him to be. Yet Jesus understood exactly why He had come, and He did not allow others' expectations or opinions to distract Him from His purpose.

The me-maze pressures us to prove ourselves, but Jesus calls us to live with purpose.

- Where do you sense God calling you to step more fully into His purpose for your life?**

- When you experience rejection, how do you typically respond? What would it look like to grow in faithfulness in those moments?**

Jesus did not show up to the festival in the way people expected. Instead, He went in privately, moving according to His purpose and timing. In John 7:37–38, Jesus makes a powerful invitation: “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.” He is pointing to the living water that only He can give. The me-maze keeps us constantly searching and thirsting for more, but Jesus is the one who truly satisfies our souls.

The next morning, a woman caught in adultery is brought before Him, and the Pharisees demand that she be stoned. After challenging them—“Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone”—they all walk away, leaving the woman standing before Jesus. He asks her if anyone has condemned her. When she says no, Jesus responds, “Neither do I condemn you.”

The me-maze tells us to do whatever it takes to be seen, but Jesus reminds us that we are already fully known and deeply loved.

- How does believing Jesus is enough help you to take yourself out of the center?**
- How does it make you feel to know that God sees you where you are and does not condemn you?**

MOVE

Read James 3:16

The book of James was written by the younger brother of Jesus—one of the children Mary and Joseph had after Him. Earlier in the Gospels, we see that even Jesus’s own brothers questioned and doubted who He was. James was likely among those who struggled to understand Jesus, leaning instead on his own expectations of what he thought Jesus should be doing.

But everything changed after witnessing who Jesus truly was. James went on to become a key leader in the early church and authored one of the books of the New Testament. When he stepped out of his own expectations and into God’s plan, his life took on a greater purpose—one that continues to impact people to this day.

In his writing, we see a clear truth: when we live with selfish ambition, it leads to disorder in our lives. But when we align ourselves with God’s way, we step into something far greater than ourselves.

- In what areas of your life (work, family, church, etc.) do you struggle most with selfish ambition?**
- How can you evaluate whether your ambition is aligned with God’s purpose or driven by selfish motives?**

When Jesus rose from the dead, He could have appeared to anyone. He could have revealed Himself to Caesar and made His resurrection undeniable to the entire world—but He didn’t. Instead, He chose to reveal Himself to the very people He had walked with throughout His ministry.

In the midst of their confusion, fear, and disappointment, Jesus came back to them personally. He met them where they were and reminded them of His true mission. He didn't come to free them from Rome, as they had hoped, but to free them from sin.

The me-maze tells us to chase recognition and become known, but Jesus calls us to be faithful.

- How can you begin to grow a stronger faith and put God at the center of your life so you don't stay stuck in the me-maze?**

P R A Y

Take a few minutes to pray for one another. Pray for strong faith and guidance through your daily lives. Pray for freedom from the Me-Maze and for God to be at the center of your life.