

# Home

AT LAST Charting  
Our Course  
for Eternity  
WITH MIKE TUCKER

## Joining The Family



### Review

When my wife and I were married, our wedding ceremony symbolized many things to me. It meant the death of one lifestyle and the birth of a new one. The lifestyle of a single man was now dead and buried for me. I was now a married man, and while I didn't yet understand all that would mean, I knew that things would change drastically in my life. Our wedding ceremony symbolized all that and much more.

When we accept Jesus as our Savior and as the Lord of our life, an old lifestyle dies, and birth is given to a new life. Jesus gave us a ceremony to commemorate these things. He gave us baptism.

Baptism reminds us of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. It symbolizes that we are entering into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection as our old life of sin dies and we give birth to the new life in Christ.

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### Digging Deeper

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Through all time, Jesus has pursued us. He always takes the initiative – **He makes the first move.** Listen to His invitation in the last book of the Bible.

Faith  
for Today

Revelation 3:20 *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.*

In the 16th chapter of Acts, Paul and Silas are taken to prison for casting a demon out of a slave girl. This girl had earned a great deal of money for her owners, but now was viewed as “damaged goods”. While they were in prison, an apparent tragedy turned into a positive life changing experience.

Acts 16:25-28 *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, “Don't harm yourself! We are all here!”*

The jailer knew that if the prisoners escaped, he would be executed. In order to

spare his family the humiliation, he decided to commit suicide. Paul knew this and told the jailer that all prisoners were accounted for.

Acts 16:29-30 *The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”*

**What did the jailer ask Paul and Silas?** What must I do to be saved?

Acts 16:31-32 *They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.*

**What did Paul and Silas say the jailer needed to do?** Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.

Then the verse explains that Paul and Silas “spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.”

How did the jailer respond to the “word of the Lord” which Paul and Silas spoke to him?

Acts 16:33-34 *At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family.*

Baptism was the immediate and natural result of the jailer’s new faith in Jesus. When he and his family discovered the One who had loved them all along, their hearts were filled with joy. That very night they were baptized, symbolizing that they were now new people with a new life.

The sequence of events went something like this: the jailer saw his need; he was introduced to Jesus; he made a decision to follow Jesus; he acknowledged that decision through baptism; and then he experienced great joy.

Jesus introduced us to baptism as the symbol of our decision to follow Him. (Note: the word, “baptize,” means to immerse).

Matthew 3:13-15 *Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.*

When Jesus said that he wanted to be baptized to “fulfill all righteousness” he was saying that his baptism would serve as a pattern for us to follow when we make the decision to follow Him.

**Why is baptism so important?** Baptism is an outward expression of what has happened inwardly.

As we continue on our course to eternity, we will want to make a public confession of our faith in Jesus. **He is the One who has loved us from the very start.** He has never been ashamed of His love for us.

As a response to that love, wouldn't you like to follow Jesus' example through baptism? So far, you have seen your need, and you have seen that Jesus meets that need in every way, and you have committed your life to Him.

Perhaps now it is time to think about the next step.

Perhaps now it is time to take the step of baptism and experience the same "great joy" the jailer felt.

