Baptism

We are not to confuse: **"Baptism of the Holy Spirit"** (Which occurs at conversion)
with
"Baptism of Water" (Which portrays a new life)

When the promised Messiah came. He promised heaven as a reality. John the Baptist, the Messiah's representative and the last of the Old Testament Prophets, came preaching an entirely new message, centered upon the promise of heaven and eternal life. Baptism of the Holy Spirit was never commanded; it was promised, and could not be administered by men, only by Jesus. If however, the baptism we are commanded to carry out is in water, then that is something man is able to obey.

All "believers" have received the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13.)

Remember John the Baptist did not want to baptize Jesus, for the obvious reason that Jesus, who never sinned, did not need repentance of sin and John felt unworthy to baptize Jesus. Jesus sought this outward identification (His public baptism) with John the Baptist's ministry to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:15.) By identifying Himself with those whom He came to redeem, Jesus inaugurated His public ministry as the Messiah, became a model for others to follow, and affirmed John the Baptist as His messenger. In His earthly work Jesus depended upon the Holy Spirit to empower Him.

Romans 6:1-4

Having already been justified (found not guilty,) a believer tells this fact to the world by submitting to the Ordinance of Water Baptism. A believer's immersion in water expresses their death to sin's rule, their rising from the water portrays their resurrection to new spiritual life. In Romans 6:1-4 we don't know if Paul was referring to literal water or spiritual baptism. We do know that every believer should be baptized in water and we also know that baptism in water is more than a ceremony; it is identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and our relationship with Jesus Christ is always meant to be public (Matthew 5:15-16.)

What does the spiritual reality involve?

1. The spiritual reality makes clear that physical baptism in water has no magical power to save. It is a dramatic picture and testimony of God's power to save. **We can do nothing except submit ourselves in faith** to what God has done on our behalf in Jesus Christ.

2. The Apostle Paul explained that to be baptized into Christ is to be baptized into His death. The point of truth is that **our salvation is completely the work of Christ** and we are joined to Him in faith to receive the benefit of His sacrificial death on the cross.

3. In the Book of Mark 16:15 we read: He said to them, "Go onto all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." The Ordinance of Water Baptism may appear to be a prerequisite to salvation. However, the negative statement mentions **believing alone:** "but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

4. Ephesians 4:4-5 teaches there is **only one baptism.** The one baptism of the one spirit is the expression of the one faith in the one Lord. It is unwise to link baptism of water with the remission of sins for nowhere do the Scriptures teach that salvation is dependent on baptism of water.