

# 1 Corinthians 1:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

## Analysis

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**Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name** (hina me tis eipe hoti eis to emon onoma ebaptisa, ἵνα μή τις εἴπῃ ὅτι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα ἐβάπτισα)—Paul's concern is not that people would say this (he knows they wouldn't accuse him directly) but that the factionalism could create this impression. Baptism **in the name of** (eis to onoma, εἰς τὸ ὄνομα) signifies ownership, allegiance, and identification. To be baptized into someone's name is to become their disciple, bound to them. Paul is horrified that anyone might think Corinthian Christians belonged to him rather than to Christ.

The phrase eis to emon onoma (εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα, "into my name") would imply Paul as the object of faith and loyalty—a notion Paul utterly rejects. Christian baptism is always and only eis to onoma Christou (into the name of Christ), never into a human leader's name. This is a crucial safeguard against personality cults and hierarchical structures that replace Christ with human mediators.

## Historical Context

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Mystery religions and philosophical schools in the Greco-Roman world often practiced initiatory rites that bound the initiate to the cult leader or divine patron. Paul deliberately distances Christian baptism from these models. Baptism is public identification with Christ's death and resurrection (Rom 6:3-4), not private allegiance to a human teacher.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How might we subtly shift baptism or church membership from identification with Christ to allegiance to a pastor or denomination?
2. What safeguards can churches put in place to ensure that baptism and other ordinances point to Christ, not to human leaders?
3. How does Paul's horror at the thought of baptizing "into his own name" model humility for Christian leaders today?

## Interlinear Text

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ἴνα μή τις εἴπῃ ὅτι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα  
G2443 G3361 any should say that in G3588 mine own name  
G5100 G2036 G3754 G1519 G1699 G3686

ἐβάπτισα

I had baptized

G907

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