

1 Corinthians 15:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

Analysis

And that he was seen of Cephas (καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ, kai hoti ophthē Kēpha)—The verb ὤφθη (ὤφθη, "he appeared, was seen") is divine passive—God caused the appearance. Paul uses Peter's Aramaic name Cephas (Κηφᾶς), connecting to the earliest Jerusalem church tradition. This appearance (Luke 24:34) restored Peter after his denial and commissioned him for apostolic ministry.

Then of the twelve (εἰτα τοῖς δώδεκα)—Paul uses "the twelve" as a technical designation even though Judas had died, indicating this was the recognized title for the apostolic college. This likely refers to the appearance in John 20:19-23. The sequential listing (eita, "then") indicates multiple, independent verification events, not a single mass hallucination.

Historical Context

Peter's special appearance established his leadership in the early church (Matthew 16:18, Galatians 1:18). The appearance to 'the twelve' as a group provides corporate testimony—the church's foundation witnessed the risen Christ collectively, not merely individually.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why does Paul list Peter (Cephas) first among the witnesses—what does this indicate about restoration after failure?
2. How does the sequential listing of appearances refute the hallucination theory?
3. What is significant about Jesus appearing to the apostles as a group, not merely individually?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὅτι	ὤφθη	Κηφᾶ	εἶτα	τοῖς	δώδεκα·
And	that	he was seen	of Cephas	then	G3588	of the twelve
G2532	G3754	G3700	G2786	G1534		G1427

Additional Cross-References

Mark 16:14 (Parallel theme): Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

1 Corinthians 1:12 (Parallel theme): Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

John 1:42 (Parallel theme): And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.