

John 19:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

Analysis

And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe (καὶ ὁ ἐωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύσητε, kai ho heōrakōs memartyrēken, kai alēthinē autou estin hē martyria, kai ekeinos oiden hoti alēthē legei, hina kai hymēis pisteusēte)—John solemnly testifies to eyewitness observation. ὁ ἐωρακὼς (ho heōrakōs, 'the one who saw') is emphatic. μεμαρτύρηκεν (memartyrēken, 'has testified') is perfect tense—past action with continuing results. His testimony is ἀληθινὴ (alēthinē, 'true, genuine, reliable'). The purpose clause ἵνα...πιστεύσητε (hina...pisteusēte, 'in order that you might believe') reveals John's evangelical intent—recording historical facts to produce faith.

This verse establishes the evidential basis of Christian faith. John doesn't ask readers to believe myths or legends but documented historical events witnessed by credible observers. Faith rests on facts, not blind credulity. The Apostle's integrity—willingness to die for testimony he knew to be either true or false—validates his credibility.

Historical Context

John likely wrote his Gospel around 85-95 AD, as the last surviving apostle. His emphatic eyewitness claim counters emerging gnostic denials of Christ's physical

incarnation and death. Church tradition records John's martyrdom under Domitian, demonstrating his willingness to die for testimony he could have recanted if false.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does John's emphatic eyewitness testimony provide a foundation for faith distinct from blind belief or subjective experience?
2. What makes the apostles' willingness to die for their testimony particularly significant for Christian apologetics?
3. How should believers today communicate that Christian faith rests on historical events, not mythology or wishful thinking?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ὁ ἐωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ
And G3588 he that saw it bare record And true his
G2532 G3708 G3140 G2532 G228 G846

ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία κάκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει
is G3588 record and he knoweth that true he saith
G2076 G3141 G2548 G1492 G3754 G227 G3004

ἴνα ὑμεῖς πιστεύσητε
that ye might believe
G2443 G5210 G4100

Additional Cross-References

John 21:24 (Truth): This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

John 15:27 (Parallel theme): And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Acts 10:39 (Parallel theme): And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

Romans 15:4 (Parallel theme): For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

John 20:31 (Faith): But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

1 Peter 5:1 (Parallel theme): The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: