

1 John 4:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Analysis

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. John grounds assurance in apostolic eyewitness testimony. "And we have seen" (kai hēmeis tetheametha)—the perfect tense emphasizes that the apostles saw and continue as eyewitnesses. This refers to their experience with the incarnate Christ—they saw, heard, and touched Him (1:1-3). The resurrection appearances particularly confirmed His identity and mission. This wasn't hearsay or legend but direct observation.

"And do testify" (kai martyroumen)—present tense indicates ongoing witness. The apostles continually bore testimony to what they saw. Martyreō (μαρτυρέω) means to bear witness, give testimony—legal language for providing evidence. Apostolic testimony has legal force—they are qualified witnesses of Christ's person and work. Their testimony, preserved in Scripture, provides objective foundation for faith.

"That the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (hoti ho patēr apestalken ton huion sōtēra tou kosmou). The perfect tense "sent" indicates completed mission with continuing significance. The purpose: "to be the Saviour" (sōtēra)—the One who saves, rescues, delivers from sin and judgment. "Of the world" (tou kosmou) emphasizes salvation's scope—not limited to Jews but extending to all peoples. Christ's saving work is sufficient for all, efficient for the elect. This universal scope grounds missionary motivation and gospel offers to all without distinction.

Historical Context

The apostolic eyewitness testimony was foundational to early Christianity's credibility. Unlike mystery religions based on myths, Christianity claimed historical events—the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul similarly emphasized eyewitnesses (1 Corinthians 15:3-8). Luke investigated eyewitness accounts carefully (Luke 1:1-4). Christianity stands or falls on historical facts, not subjective experiences or philosophical speculation.

The title "Saviour of the world" was politically charged. Roman emperors claimed this title (soter tou kosmou). Augustus was hailed as savior bringing peace. John's use of this title for Jesus asserted Christianity's counter-imperial claim—Caesar isn't the world's savior; Jesus Christ is. This wasn't merely spiritual rhetoric but comprehensive claim that Christ alone saves from sin, death, and judgment. His kingdom supersedes all earthly empires.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the apostolic eyewitness testimony preserved in Scripture provide objective foundation for your faith?
2. What's the relationship between Christ as 'Saviour of the world' (universal scope) and not all being saved (particular redemption)?
3. How should understanding that Christianity rests on historical facts rather than private experiences or feelings affect your confidence and evangelism?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἡμεῖς τεθεάμεθα καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν ὅτι ὁ πατὴρ
And we have seen And do testify that G3588 the Father
G2532 G2249 G2300 G2532 G3140 G3754 G3962

ἀπέσταλκεν τὸν υἱὸν σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου
sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world
G649 G3588 G5207 G4990 G3588 G2889

Additional Cross-References

1 John 4:10 (Parallel theme): Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

John 4:42 (Salvation): And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

John 1:29 (Parallel theme): The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:14 (Parallel theme): And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 12:47 (Salvation): And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

1 Peter 5:12 (Witness): By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

1 John 5:9 (Witness): If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

John 5:39 (Witness): Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Acts 18:5 (Parallel theme): And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

John 3:34 (Parallel theme): For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

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