

Why John Wrote a Gospel: Jesus--Memory--History

Tom Thatcher



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Nineteen-hundred years ago, someone called the Beloved Disciple told stories about Jesus and his days on earth. These stories had been told for decades when someone took the stories and wrote them down, turning them from oral tradition into the book we know as the Gospel of John. Scholars have long concentrated on the content of this Fourth Gospel, analyzing how it differs from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke and wondering how the different Gospels relate to the Jesus of history. Tom Thatcher builds on all of this previous scholarship in this book, focusing on how stories and written texts operate to reflect and to create memory within groups of people. He uncovers how early Christians strove to remember Jesus in the decades after Jesus' ministry and how Christians came into conflict with one another about which memories were best. With this interest in the social memory of early Christians, Thatcher provides original insights into the Gospel of John and provides new answers to old questions.

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