Here now is Hugo Mendez’s second post in his thread (started yesterday, if you haven’t seen it yet), challenging whether the writings of John all emerge from a specific “community,” as I argued in my previous thread. In this post he points out how scholars have called into question whether the idea of “communities” is helpful at all for understanding the early Gospels.

Hugo will be happy to address your questions! Just post yours as a comment to the post.

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**Challenges to the Idea of “Gospel Communities”**

As I noted last time, my most recent article questions the existence of the Johannine Community.

There’s an early tendency when some hear of my project to confuse it with some other recent attempts to challenge the idea of “gospel communities.” Before discussing the terms of my own proposal, then, I’d like to catch you all up to speed with the current state of that debate over “communities” and where I “fit” into this discussion.

Today, New Testament scholars seem to fall into one of roughly three camps on this question.

**Majority:**

**The idea of gospel “communities” is a meaningful concept.**

The first camp should be the most familiar. Far and away, the majority continue to hold that the idea of gospel communities is worth preserving.

**Minority 1:**

**Gospels were not written for “communities” but for “all Christians”**

A second group—what I’ll call the “Gospels for All Christians” camp—is smaller but commands a significant following in more conservative circles of biblical scholarship. In 1998, a group of British scholars led by Richard Bauckham published a landmark collection of essays entitled, *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking Gospel Audiences*. The book’s first line states its purpose clearly: “the aim of this book is to challenge and to refute the current consensus... which assumes that each of the Gospels was written for a specific church or group of churches; the so-called Matthean community, Markan community, Lukan community, and Johannine community.”

In the lead essay in the piece, Bauckham observes that...

To see the rest of this post you will need to belong to the blog. But the GOOD NEWS is that there are free two-month memberships available. Wanna join for nuthin’? Just register. But if you’re willing to pay the small membership fee: every penny will go to those in need during the crisis. Either way, join up!
Was There One Author Behind the Four Johannine Writings? A Community? Guest Post by Hugo Mendez

WAS there a Community behind the Gospel and Letters of John? Guest Post by Hugo Mendez