



### **History**

Benno Zuiddam has his roots in the Low Countries of the 16th century. Over the years different spellings of the surname Van Suytdam / Van Zuidam emerged, resulting in e.g. in Zuidam, Zuiddam, Suydam. His wider family was involved in the establishment of New Holland and the city of Nieuw Amsterdam (New York) in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Others settled in South-Africa (mainly Natal) and Australia. His wife's ancestors were among the earliest Dutch settlers when they joined the Cape Colony of Jan van Riebeeck in the 17th century.

### **Presbyterian Church of Australia**

Benno is a minister in the Presbyterian Church of Australia and serves on several boards and assemblies of this church in Tasmania.

### **North West University (Potchefstroom)**

Benno Alexander Zuiddam (DTh *Church History and Polity*, PhD *Greek*) serves at associate professor extraordinary at the Theological Faculty of North West University (South Africa), in the School for Biblical Studies and Ancient Languages.

### **Research focus:**

Divine Revelation through Sacred Scripture. Particularly interested in early Christian & Biblical literature and the Greco-Roman World, but also in modern and post modern theological liberalism.

Past projects:

- a) Pagan intellectual criticism of Christianity in the 2nd and 3rd century.<sup>1</sup>
- b) the authority of the Scriptures in the early post-apostolic Church, combining patristic interest with the field of Biblical Studies;<sup>2</sup>
- c) a comparison of Divine Revelation in the Apostolic Church and Plutarch;<sup>3</sup>
- d) early theological liberalism at the Cape of Good Hope (19th century).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Old critics and modern theology* (Christianity evaluated by pagan philosophers of the first three centuries), In: Dutch Reformed Theological Journal (NGTT), Part XXVI (2), June 1995, 256-266.

<sup>2</sup> *Holy letters and syllables: The function and character of Biblical authority in the second century*. In: Dutch Reformed Theological Journal (NGTT, South Africa) Part XXXVIII (3), September 1997, 180-191.

<sup>3</sup> *Plutarch and God-eclipse in Christian Theology*. In: Ploutarchos, n.s., Scholarly Journal of the International Plutarch Society, (6) 2008/2009: 83-100. *Λόγιον in Biblical Literature and its implications for Christian Scholarship*.

In: *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* (19) 2008: 379-394.

### **Promotor**

Presently study leader for the following PhD-projects in New Testament Studies and Church History & Polity.

- Theology in James and Hebrews: positive and negative portraits of Messianic Judaism and Pauline Christianity.
- A biblical, historical and practical study of the form of church government known traditionally as Independency.

### **Publications**

Benno wrote several theological books, amongst which are a general introduction to the history of the Western Church, called “Hope and Disillusionment,” helping Christians to come to terms with the rights and wrongs of the Church in its history and present functioning. This book has been made freely available on the internet to assist students in underdeveloped and non-Western countries. His scholarly study on the authority of the Bible in the second century has been published in Dutch and is available worldwide. He also translated Calvin’s commentary on John’s Epistles.

### **Professional activities**

Prof. Zuiddam regularly contributes to a diversity of academic journals in articles & reviews and also serves as referee.

He is a full member of the New Testament Society of South Africa and the international Society of Biblical Literature and has read papers at annual meetings of both.

Benno is also involved in the patristic research unit of the Theological Faculty of Leuven (Evangelical) and on the advisory board of Marturia.

### **Information for Masters and PhD-students**

Thinking about postgraduate studies? Prof. Zuiddam can be called upon as promoter for candidates in Church History (particularly early Patristic), New Testament and Greek (also Septuagint and Greco-Roman world). He encourages a text-orientated approach that aims at doing justice to the available primary sources. Benno particularly welcomes research proposals with an interest in the mechanics of Divine revelation and (aspects of) the Bible as Word of God and its reception in the Church. Related to this, he takes an interest in the study of theological liberalism, especially in Colonial South-African history.

### **Contacts details**

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<sup>4</sup> Reason’s dead end in David Faure: Why the Cape’s earliest liberal minister embraced Spiritualism. In: *In die Skriflig* (Scholarly Journal GKSA) 43(2) 2009.