

# Contents

General preface	7
Author's preface	9
Bibliography	13
<b>The wisdom of God</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Part 1: Wisdom's portrait (1:1 – 9:18)</b>	<b>30</b>
The town crier (1:20–33)	31
Wisdom needs to be searched for (2:1–9)	32
A winsome personality (2:10–15)	34
Wisdom celebrates life (3:13–18)	35
Wisdom likes to explore (4:1–9)	38
Wisdom stands for justice	39
Wisdom likes things ordered	40
Wisdom illustrates the pattern of creation (3:19–20)	41
The full-colour portrait (8:1–31)	43
Wisdom: her main features	52
<b>Part 2: Wisdom's instructors and Wisdom's detractors (1:1 – 9:18)</b>	<b>60</b>
Ten fatherly talks	61
Wisdom's detractors	70
Gang violence (1:10–19)	71
Sexual promiscuity	72
Laziness	77
Rejection of parental values	78
Problem pupils	79
The way of Wisdom or the way of Folly?	80
<b>Part 3: Wisdom's methods</b>	<b>83</b>
The theology of lived experience	83
'An anthology of gnomes'	85
Fourfold structure	86
Wisdom's imagination	89
Appendix: A brief note on practical theology, philosophy and education	95

<b>Part 4: Wisdom's values: Foundations (10:1 – 22:16)</b>	99
The wise sayings of Solomon	100
The fear of the LORD	101
Love	103
Justice	111
Character: a summary	118
<b>Part 5: Wisdom's values: The practical dimension (10:1 – 22:16)</b>	120
Family, marriage and parenthood	121
Diligence, creativity and hard work	124
Health	125
Security and safety	128
Material sufficiency	130
The importance of appropriate speech	133
The king's glory and the national honour	136
Animal welfare	137
Life, freedom and hope	138
Knowledge and understanding	139
<b>Part 6: Wisdom's values: The words of the wise</b>	144
Sayings of the Wise (22:17 – 24:22; 24:23–34)	144
Proverbs of Solomon: Hezekiah's edition (25:1 – 29:27)	151
Sayings of Agur (30:1–33)	161
Thoughts from the queen mother (31:1–9)	165
Epilogue: The wife of noble character: Wisdom at home (31:10–31)	166
<b>Conclusion: Godliness in working clothes</b>	170