



Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics

By Samuel Wells



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In *Improvisation*, Samuel Wells defines improvisation in the theater as "a practice through which actors seek to develop trust in themselves and one another in order that they may conduct unscripted dramas without fear." Sounds a lot like life, doesn't it? Building trust, overcoming fear, conducting relationships, and making choices--all without a script.

Wells establishes theatrical improvisation as a model for Christian ethics, a matter of "faithfully improvising on the Christian tradition." He views the Bible not as a "script" but as a "training school" that shapes the habits and practices of the Christian community. Drawing on scriptural narratives and church history, Wells explains six practices that characterize both improvisation and Christian ethics. His model of improvisation reinforces the goal of Christian ethics--to teach Christians to "embody their faith in the practices of discipleship all the time."

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is one of the most relevant, stimulating and lucid books on Christian ethics to appear for some time...it is in many places profound and original, and it deserves to be widely read and discussed". Duncan B Forrester, University of Edinburgh "Improvisation indeed. Bold, creative, and yet showing a deep mastery of his craft, Samuel Wells charts a fresh course for Christian theological ethics that is at once artful, contemporary, and faithful, both to the Bible and to the best of Christian ethical reflection." Michael Hanby, Baylor University. "This extraordinarily sophisticated book can be read for profit by those well schooled in the literature of theology...this book will satisfy those who hunger and thirst for an account of what it means to live as a Christian in our day." Stanley Hauerwas, Duke Divinity School."

About the Author

Samuel Wells (PhD, University of Durham) is vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Anglican Church at Trafalgar Square in London. He previously served as dean of the chapel and research professor of Christian ethics at Duke University. He is the author of *Transforming Fate into Destiny: The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas* and coedited, with Stanley Hauerwas, *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*.

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