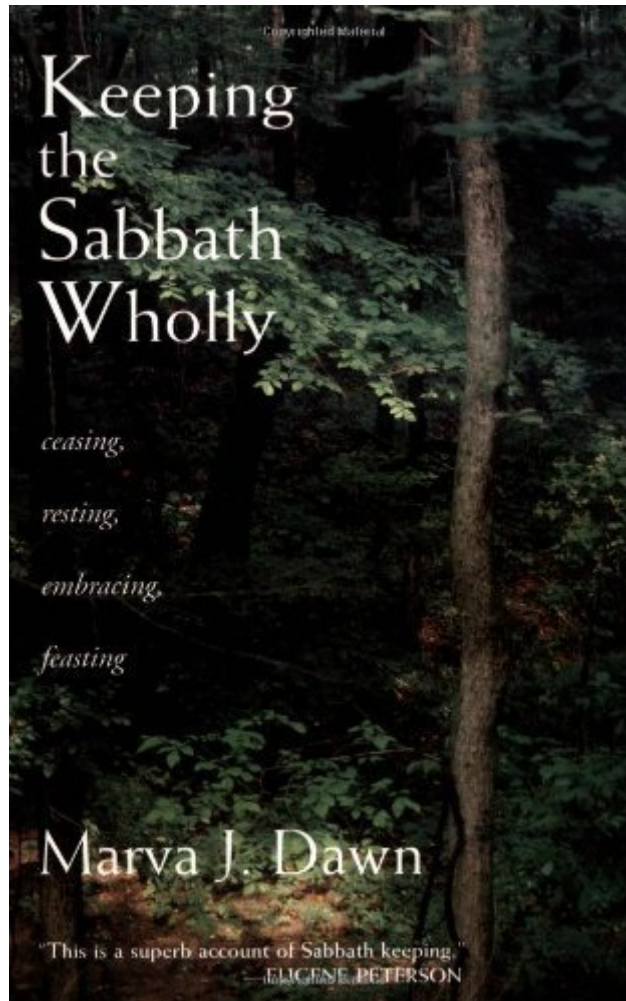


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# Keeping The Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting



## Synopsis

This book invites the reader to experience the wholeness and joy that come from observing God's order for life--a rhythm of working six days and setting apart one day for rest, worship, festivity, and relationships. Dawn's work offers both motivation and methods for enjoying a special holy day.

## Book Information

File Size: 398 KB

Print Length: 244 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0802804578

Publisher: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing (September 1, 1989)

Publication Date: September 1, 1989

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B001QPHNSA

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #527,916 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #212

inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Holidays #250 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Other Religions, Practices & Sacred Texts > Ritual #937 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Holidays

## Customer Reviews

As Ms. Dawn says in the Preface to her book, legalism is contrary to the keeping of the Sabbath. The important thing is the keeping of the Sabbath for the health of one's relationship with God, and for one's own spiritual, physical, and emotional health. I have found this book to be one of the most important things I've ever read: it offers practical ways for Christians (and others, if they care to borrow) to keep the Sabbath, which is helpful for those without a strong model to work from. The book is broken into four parts, of seven chapters each, so it can be read a chapter a day for four weeks, gently guiding the reader into a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the day of rest. It also focuses equally well on the negative (ceasing and resting from things) and positive

(embracing and feasting) aspects of the Sabbath. I am sorry that the previous reviewer of the book was unable to glean the many helpful and exciting ideas that I found, especially as both she and Ms. Dawn seem to have an equal respect for Abraham Joshua Heschel's book on the Sabbath (another book everyone should read). Contrary to her perception of it, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly* is an holistic approach to Sabbath-keeping, entirely centered around God.

Finally a Sabbath book that doesn't seek to convince one of which day should be kept as the Sabbath, but focusses instead on HOW to keep the Sabbath. The book is broken into four major parts - ceasing, resting, embracing, and feasting. Each of those chapter breaks its subject down into seven areas. For example, the section on resting covers physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and social rest. You don't have to agree with the author or her experiences to see the value in taking 24 full hours off each week. I can testify that when I was both working and going to school, that 24 hours kept me sane and gave me something to look forward to. If you want to know which day is the Sabbath, this book isn't for you. (I would recommend Samuele Bacchiocchi's book "From Sabbath To Sunday" to treat this subject.) If someone is looking for ways to keep the Sabbath and experience the full blessing of God on this day, then this book gives many ideas.

This is the second Sabbath book I have read (the first being "Celebrating the Sabbath" by Bruce Ray). My question has always been, "How do we keep the Sabbath holy as the Lord says? I know it is supposed to be a day of rest, but what else and how does that look?" I was delighted to read about this author's special detailed attention given to this holy day. I enjoyed her references to Jewish tradition and symbols and what they meant. Since reading this book, I have adopted the practice each week of lighting the Kiddush candles while praying to mark the start of the Sabbath when I go to bed. The following night, I then light the Havdalah candles while praying to commence the Sabbath. This has helped me to be intentional about my activities during the time in between these two lightings. The author emphasized the need for us to learn how to celebrate life on the Sabbath. She showed how fellowship with others, going to church, alone time with God, reading morally uplifting books (not studying), recreation or sleep, feasting, appreciating God's creation outdoors or in art, and more can all be part of God's Sabbath day. She also equally addressed what to stay away from and how to avoid certain unholy attitudes during this special day. The author's perspective is also from a lifestyle of singleness. A good perspective, but I must say that being married and having children would change how observing the Sabbath would look. I do hope to eventually find a book with a family Sabbath outlook. Overall, a great book of concrete examples of

how God would love for us to enjoy Him!

When it comes to the Sabbath, there are four basic questions: What is it (what does it mean)? Who should celebrate it? When should it be celebrated? and How should it be celebrated? Dawn's is a mostly practical book on Sabbath-keeping, and she spends most of her space discussing the last question and conspicuously -- and, I suspect, intentionally -- avoids the other three. (For a relatively brief theological discussion of those other concerns from a Christian perspective, I'd recommend chapters 28-30 of John Frame's *Doctrine of the Christian Life*.) I read and discussed this book with a group of folks from my church. In general we liked it, but I think the book could have used a better editor to help keep Dawn focused. She has many good things to say herein, but not all of them actually belonged in this book. She could have excised some of the tangents (e.g., on our sexuality) and entire chapters (e.g., the one on worship music), and the book would have been just as useful as far as Sabbath-keeping is concerned but more readable because it strayed from the topic less. We also found the two middle sections on resting and embracing to be in large part redundant or unrelated to the topic at hand. The summaries of those sections that appeared later in the section on feasting, however, were more helpful and meaningful to us than the sections themselves, and we found ourselves wishing she had developed the theme of resting as repentance, for instance, more fully in those middle sections. (If you get bored by the middle, don't give up -- the section on feasting is much better!) All in all, the book is useful, but it could have been executed in a better way, methinks.

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