RUTH HALEY BARTON

SABBATH JOURNAL

> What Your Soul Wants to Say to God



**Note:** InterVarsity Press

## Welcome!

E very spiritual practice corresponds to some deep desire of the human heart, and sabbath-keeping is no exception. God's gift of the sabbath corresponds to our desire for rest . . . replenishment . . . freedom . . . delight . . . a way of life that works. The commitment to embrace a sabbath practice (rather than just reading and dreaming about it) emerges from a deep connection with our own souls and the desires that stir there.

Authentic desire is the only motivation powerful enough to help us establish and maintain this countercultural rhythm. This journal is meant to be a place where you can interact honestly and freely with God about your longing for a way of life that works: one that is grounded in life-giving rhythms of work and rest. It will keep bringing you back to your desire so that desire can deepen into intent, until eventually you are ordering your life in new ways.

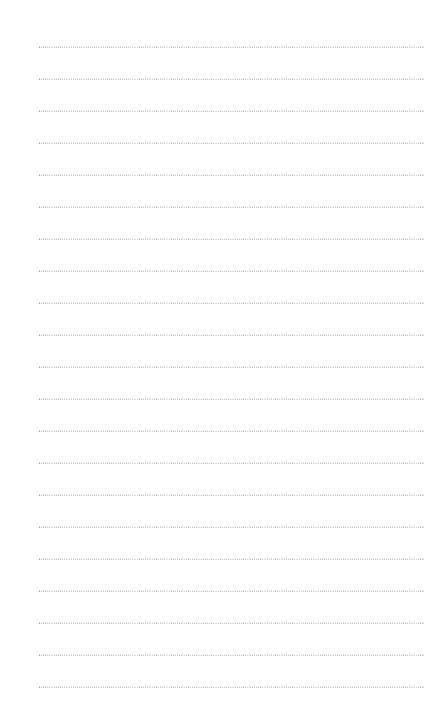
With quotations drawn from *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest,* this journal provides space for you to respond to the reflection questions found in the

Taken from *Sabbath Journal* by Ruth Haley Barton. Copyright ©2023 by Ruth Haley Barton Published by InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL. www.ivpress.com. "What Your Soul Wants to Say to God" section at the end of each chapter. What you write here does not have to be profound; it just needs to be true. And even after you have finished reading the book, you can keep using this journal as a sacred space to say something true to God as part of your sabbath practice.

You will find blank pages intermixed with lined pages to give you space to draw or simply write outside the lines. Also included to use as you wish are fifty-two "Sabbath Prompts" to spark your practice and give shape to your sabbath journey. We have placed this list at the back of the journal in order to encourage you to use these ideas as is fitting for the needs of your soul and not as a checklist.

I am not saying everyone must write in a journal as part of their sabbath practice. All I know is that when I am able to express something true to God on the sabbath, something inexplicably restful happens. Rather than staying stuck in the wearying pattern of holding everything in and holding myself tight, journaling offers a way to open up and invite God in. This is a unique kind of rest for the soul.

If journaling ever starts to feel like work to you or seems like a burden, don't do it. But if the idea of journaling once a week as part of your sabbath practice feels fresh, inviting, or helpful—by all means, give it a try and see what God does with it!



To my knowledge God has never "taken back" the gift of the sabbath—it was one of the Ten Commandments, after all, and the best one if you ask me!

Sabbath-keeping is a way of ordering all of life around the pattern of working six days and ceasing on the seventh. It helps us arrange our lives to honor the rhythms of work and rest, fruitfulness and dormancy, giving and receiving, being and doing, activism and surrender.

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