

of communion. God spoke from Sinai and said, "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*" The day belongs to God as the temple belongs to him, as the altar belongs to him, as the sacrificial lamb belongs to him, and can no more be devoted, even to lawful worldly things, than could the temple be devoted to purposes of lawful merchandise, or the altar to profane use. This idea of the Sabbath is the Puritan idea, embodied by them in these memorable words: "The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employment and recreations as are lawful on other days, and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy." When the whole heart is given to God this idea of the Sabbath will not be felt to be severe and irksome, but joyful as is to the child a whole day with a beloved father after the enforced absence of a long and weary week. And again in the way of mutual reaction; such a way of keeping the Sabbath, tends greatly to keep the heart true to God, just as frequent days spent in the nearest communion with a loving and loveable father tends to keep true to him the heart of the son who must needs be at times away from his father's presence and among his father's bitter enemies.

OUR SUBSTANCE.

3. The next thing demanded by God is that His people should give him the TENTH OF THEIR SUBSTANCE. It would be strange if God, who has fixed so definitely the proportion of time, should leave indefinite the proportion of substance. That some portion of the substance is demanded is clear from the way God fenced in one tree in the Garden of Eden. One tree belonged to the Lord of the garden. It stood for God as evidence of

His lordship over this earth; and to man it stood as evidence of his vassalship to his Creator and God. Unless God was prepared to abrogate his sovereignty over the earth and man, there must needs be some visible token of his claim, some share assigned to him of the produce of Eden. For man to touch that tree was therefore not only to do a thing forbidden, but to rob God. And just as the Sabbath was enjoined on man after his expulsion from paradise, so also did God continue to claim a certain share of man's substance, as is clear from the words used in regard to Abel's worship: "He brought of the firstling of his flock." Why firstling? And what is the precise idea conveyed here? By firstlings, Deut. xiv. 28, compared with Num. xviii. 17, are meant tithe animals. God cannot abandon, therefore, the claims he made in Eden, for he claimed there, as to heart, time and substance, only what is eternally and immutably right. The firstling of the flock is therefore the fee-duty which man as God's feudatory owes his Lord. Cain's departure from this order in bringing not a fixed share, but whatever came to hand was, Tertullian thinks, the first step in the sad apostacy which ended by his "going out from the presence of the Lord," and abandoning altogether set times and forms of worship. A similar law of order and proportion Noah seems to have followed when anew he sat up Divine worship after the flood (Gen. viii. 20), and from him, as Selden in his learned treatise on Tithes shews, the practice of consecrating to the gods the tenth of the fruits of the earth, and the spoils of war, spread out among all the nations of antiquity. This law of giving Abraham observed, when he as the representative of the saints, till the end of time gave tithes to Melchizedek, the representative of Christ. This