

1 Cor. 15 : 20, 21, 50-58—Memory Verses, 55-58.

**Golden Text**—Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.—1 Cor. 15 : 20.



20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where *is* thy sting ? O grave, where *is* thy victory ?

56 The sting of death *is* sin ; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Je'sus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

### THE LESSON RETOLD

The church at Corinth had been much troubled by questions arising among them which they were unable to answer.

Some of these questions were, "How do you know that any will rise from the dead ? And suppose they should, what sort of a body will they have ? Also, when will the resurrection be ?"

Hearing of their perplexity, Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthian Christians saying, "We know that, until the time when Adam disobeyed God, there was no such thing as death.

"Since then people everywhere have been afraid to die, and why ? Because they too have broken God's law.

"Now, we as Christians believe that, when Christ the Son of God came and died for our sins upon the cross, He destroyed the power of both sin and death at the same time. There is, then, no longer any need for Christians to be afraid of death. How we should

praise and thank the Lord for giving us so great a Saviour ! Where, O death, is now thy sting ? Where, O grave, is now thy victory ?

"As for the exact time when the dead shall rise," said Paul, "no man knows.

"But we do know that when Christ shall come again He will come suddenly. The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall rise up. In a moment, even in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be changed and shall receive the bodies which we shall keep for ever and ever. It was of this day that the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'Death shall be swallowed up in victory.'

"But why," asked the apostle, "should any man think it strange that Christ should give His friends a new body ? Does not something almost as wonderful take place every time a seed or bulb is planted in the garden ? The seed must die and the bulb decay before out of it can spring the leaves and flowers.