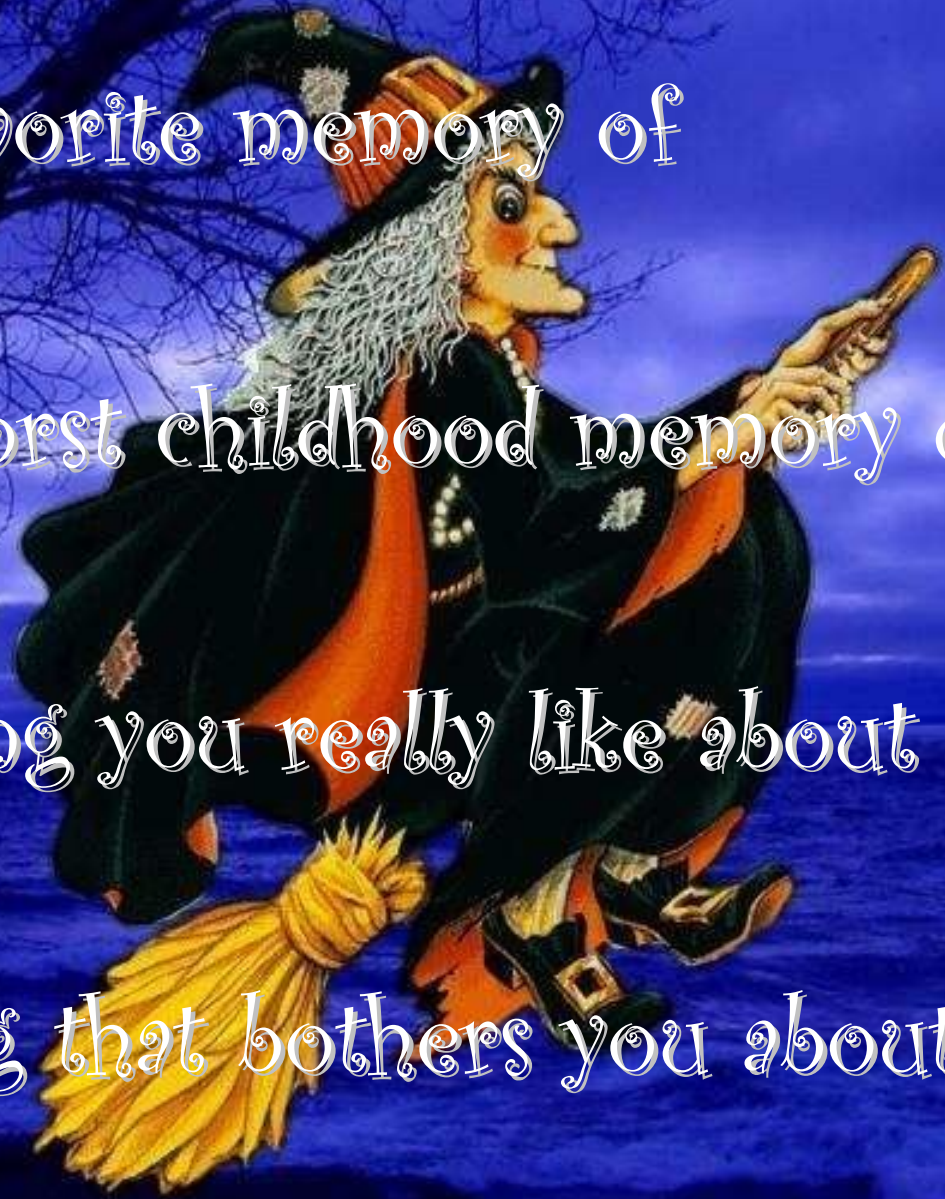




Trick or Treat:

What's Halloween About?

- What is your favorite memory of Halloween?
- What is your worst childhood memory of Halloween?
- What is one thing you really like about Halloween?
- Is there anything that bothers you about Halloween?



History of Halloween

- Originated with Celtic festival of Samhain
- Brought into Christianity by St. Patrick when he integrated Celtic rituals with christian celebrations
- Became associated with All Saints Day on November 1 and became All Hallows Eve
- Was time to pray for the souls of the departed
- With Reformation dropped from Church practice but continued in folk culture

Halloween Traditions

Jack-O'-Lantern

Celts carried large carved turnip with candle in it to ward of evil spirits during Samhein

Legend has it that a mean old man named Jack couldn't get into heaven when he died and when he met the devil he was given a piece of coal which he put in a turnip to light his way as he wandered aimlessly looking for a place to stay

When immigrants came to America though found the large orange pumpkin that was more attractive and better than a turnip and so we now use pumpkins to make Jack's lantern

Halloween Traditions

Black Cats

Due to cats nocturnal habits and eyes that glow in the dark, a sign of evil, they became associated with witches in the middle ages. Therefore as traditions about Halloween grew with the wicked witch as a prime character the cat and particularly the sinister sneaky black cat was right there.



Halloween Traditions

Halloween Costumes

During Samhain Celts dressed up as animals to mark end of Summer

When adopted for All Saints Day Christians dressed as saints, angels, devils and fairies to honor the hallowed spirits.

In late 19th century Halloween became a time for the elite to have masquerade balls

Tradition has grown to be a day when we all wear costumes and fantasize about be our alter-ego

Halloween Traditions

Trick-or-Treating

Roots in Celtic tradition where it was believed on the day after Samhain the spirits of those who had died in the past year transitioned from this world to the spirit world. To aid their ancestors on the journey the Celtic people would leave out food for the spirits to eat before their long journey.

When tradition taken into Christianity the poor would go door to door for bread or a cake in return for saying a prayer for the departed souls - known as souling

Over time the town's children became the beggars and would dress up and go house to house for a treat

During the Pioneer days housewives would give children candy in return for not having a trick played on them.

Do you believe we can have experiences with the spirit of those that have left us?

Do you have an experience like this you are willing to share?

Does this belief have any validity in our Christian faith?





Why has scaring people become a part of Halloween?

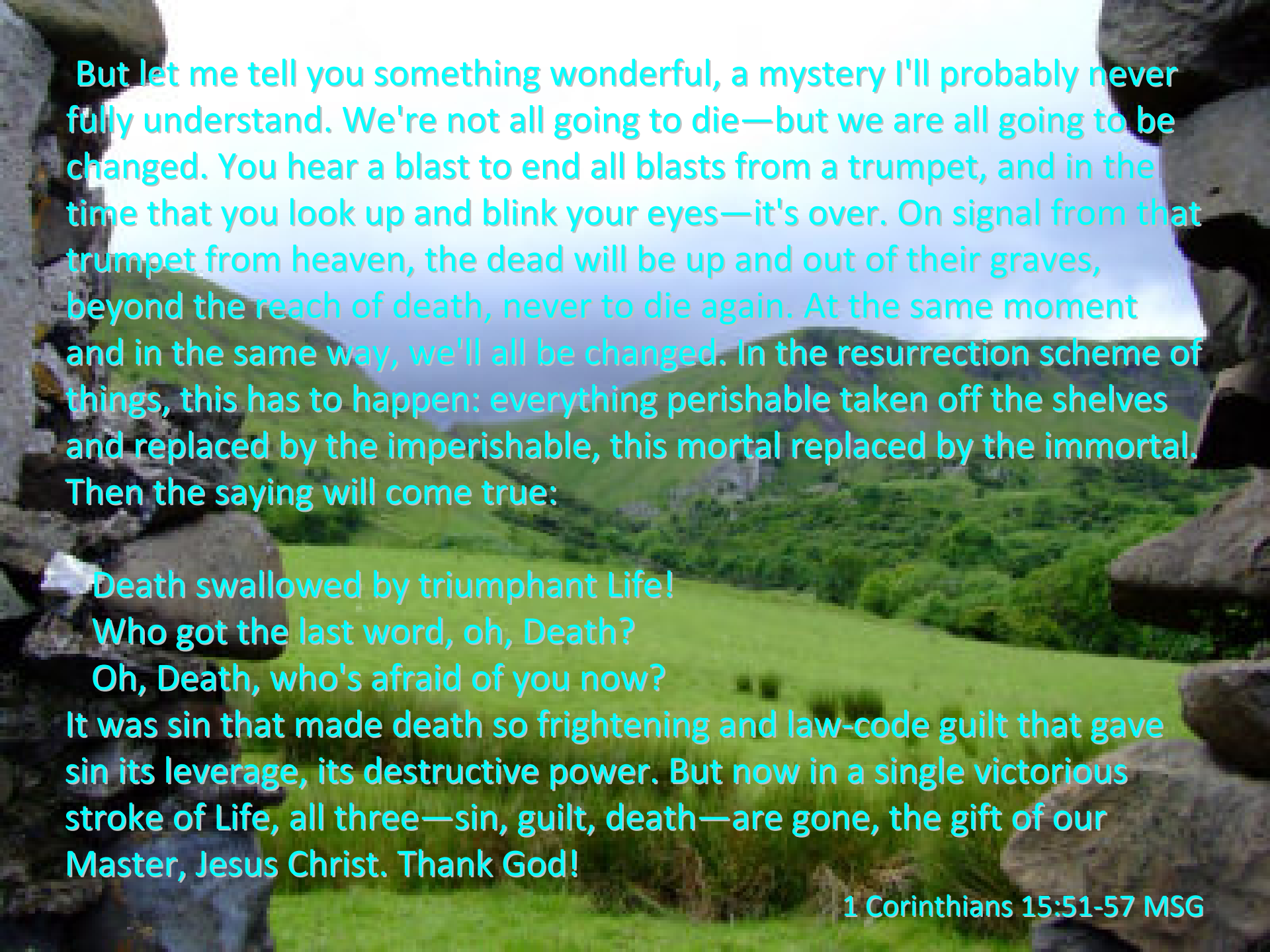
Is there any redeeming elements about Halloween being a scary time?



Is it right for the Church take a pagan or secular celebration and incorporate it into its traditions?

Should we as Christians participate in or boycott Halloween? Why or why not?

Can we as Christians justify the celebration of the dead?



But let me tell you something wonderful, a mystery I'll probably never fully understand. We're not all going to die—but we are all going to be changed. You hear a blast to end all blasts from a trumpet, and in the time that you look up and blink your eyes—it's over. On signal from that trumpet from heaven, the dead will be up and out of their graves, beyond the reach of death, never to die again. At the same moment and in the same way, we'll all be changed. In the resurrection scheme of things, this has to happen: everything perishable taken off the shelves and replaced by the imperishable, this mortal replaced by the immortal. Then the saying will come true:

Death swallowed by triumphant Life!

Who got the last word, oh, Death?

Oh, Death, who's afraid of you now?

It was sin that made death so frightening and law-code guilt that gave sin its leverage, its destructive power. But now in a single victorious stroke of Life, all three—sin, guilt, death—are gone, the gift of our Master, Jesus Christ. Thank God!

*When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true:
“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”*

1 Corinthians 15:54

What does this Scripture tell us about death and those that have already died?

How does this relate to the celebration that surrounds Halloween and All Saints Day?

Should we as Christians be afraid of death? If we should why and if not why not?



Happy Halloween