

“Being Raised” in 1 Cor 15

Resurrection Series (Part 8)

By Ed Stevens -- Then and Now Podcast -- Oct 6, 2013

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Thanks for joining us here for another study of the Resurrection from a full preterist perspective.
- B. Last time we looked at a lot of biblical texts trying to determine **WHO** the Dead Ones were, and **WHERE** they were raised out of.
- C. This session we will be clarifying more of the Resurrection terminology, especially the phrase “being raised” as it is used in 1 Cor 15.
- D. Let's pray, before we get into that study --

Our Creator and Sustainer – the very Source of Life in all its various forms. We magnify and exalt Your Holy Name for creating us and giving us life, and for regenerating us in Christ. We ask for your Spirit's illumination in our hearts as we study the words you revealed to us through Your bond-servant Apostle Paul in his first letter to the church in Corinth. We come with open hearts. May You fill us up with understanding. It is in the Matchless Name of Jesus that we pray. Amen.

- E. All of our past studies on the resurrection, including this one also, are building a foundation for understanding what the first century resurrection was all about. Before interpreting the individual resurrection texts, we need to define the terms and explain the concepts that are found in those texts. That will make our interpretation of those texts go a lot faster and easier.
- F. We noted last time that there are a lot of terms and concepts about the resurrection that are floating around within Preterism, some of which were invented by Futurists to support their Bodies out of the Grave (BOG) resurrection view, or redefined by fellow-preterists to support their own particular resurrection view.
- G. There is a debate principle which says: “He who defines the terms, wins the debate.” That is why we are spending so much time defining these terms and explaining these concepts up front, before we start interpreting the biblical text.
- H. We might also add that ultimately in the long term, the only definitions and concepts that will stand the test of time are those which come from the Bible and are in harmony with what the Bible teaches. So, that will be our focus here: trying to discover how the Bible defines all these words and phrases and concepts that are connected with the Resurrection issue.

[FROM ED] Before we get into our study, I want to share some feedback I received from Dan Harden about our previous podcast on the phrase “our body” in Phil. 3:21:

On 10/4/13 10:59 PM, "Daniel E. Harden" <danieleharden@hotmail.com> wrote:

Dan:

Here is the Leon Morris citation that I mentioned before. It's actually in his commentary on Romans, and he actually cites Nigel Turner:

Leon Morris, Romans, on “redemption of our body” (Rom 8:23) *The Epistles to the Romans* (A Pillar New Testament Commentary, 1988, Eerdmans), page 324 Footnote 103 reads:

This is a further example of the use of the singular σώμα [body], of something that is true of each member of a group – a Semitic use, as Turner points out [Grammar-Moulton-Howard-Turner, vol. 3, p. 24].

The full reference to Turner is as follows:

A Grammar of New Testament Greek, vol. 3, Syntax, by Nigel Turner (Edinburgh, 1963). Volume 1 is by J. H. Moulton, and the collection is also referred to as Moulton-Howard-Turner’s *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, begun by J. H. Moulton in 1906 and finished by Nigel Turner in 1976.

Page 24 is in Chapter Two, titled The Gender and Number of Nouns. He specifically points to the singular used “of a group” in Matt. 6:25 and Luke 12:22; Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 6:19,20; 2 Cor. 4:10; and James 3:3, in addition to Phil. 3:21. He specifically says, regarding using a singular to refer to each member in the group (on page 23):

Contrary to normal Greek and Latin practice, the NT sometimes follows the Aramaic and Hebrew preference for a ***distributive singular***. Something belonging to each person in a group of people is placed in the singular: as in TO SOMA HUMON (1 Cor 6:19), and EN TE KARDIA AUTON (Lk 1:66). On the other hand, the New Testament does frequently exhibit the plural, e.g., KARDIAI (Matt 9:4).

He then cites “your body” in 1 Cor. 6:19 and “their heart” in Luke 1:66. He then lists a number of nouns that function in this way in the NT, and cites other Semitisms that follow the same pattern. Go to the following link and then to pages 23-25, in which he cites a number of different nouns used this way:

http://books.google.com/books?id=svsbmuKLNQ8C&pg=PA21&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false

Note: this reference material will be inserted in the previous PDF that dealt with this issue. If you would like to have the new updated PDF of that, simply email me and request the PDF on "OUR BODY" in Phil. 3:21.

“Are Being Raised” in 1 Cor 15, verses 15, 16, 29, 32, and 35

Before we start looking at the proper translation and meaning of this phrase (“are being raised”) in the Greek, we need to have our Bibles open to First Corinthians chapter fifteen. We need to look at the verses which use this phrase. You might want to read the whole chapter of 1 Cor 15 before listening to the rest of this podcast. But at least scan down through the context before we get into the particular verses.

One of the big arguments used by the Collective Body advocates to support their view is based on the grammatical structure of the phrase “the dead are [not] raised” found in 1 Cor 15:15, 16, 29, 32, 35. They say that this particular grammatical structure (the present passive indicative form of the Greek verb EGEIRO “raised”) should be translated as “the dead are **being** raised” instead of simply “the dead are raised.”

They use this particular translation of the Greek verb EGEIRO (“are **being** raised”) as proof that Paul has to be talking about a collective body in the process of “**being** raised” at the time Paul was writing to the Corinthians (in AD 57).

In other words, they are teaching the resurrection as being a **process** (not an event) that was already going on at the time Paul wrote. They do not see the resurrection of the dead as an event that would only occur at the Parousia. They instead see it as a **process of resurrection** that was already going on during the transition period, which would not be completed until the Parousia. And they use this particular translation of the present passive verb EGEIRO to support that process idea.

We need to note here that all the standard English translations render this phrase as “**are raised**” instead of “**are being raised**.” That means the burden of proof rests totally upon the Collective Body guys to show that all the standard English translations have rendered it incorrectly.

As we will see below, William Bell and other Collective Body advocates claim that the translation “**being raised**” does not allow the idea of individual saints being raised out of Hades to be under consideration here in the context of 1 Cor 15, since that would not fit their collective body idea of a process of “**being raised**.” They claim that the translation “**are being raised**” only fits the collective body view. So they not only change the translation, but use that translation to rule out any other possible interpretations of resurrection in this context.

Sam Frost and the other collective body guys made a big deal about this argument, claiming that it was their killer argument for 1 Cor 15. I assume that Sam Frost was the first one of the Collective Body guys to use this argument, since I have not seen it in any of Max King’s books or seminar speeches. However, at least twenty years earlier Max King was already teaching the concept of a “dying-rising reciprocity” and a “change or transformation” *resurrection process* going on throughout the transition period for the collective body. So Frost merely added this grammatical argument to further support Max’s already existing resurrection process paradigm. Max King seems to have

borrowed this concept of a collective body resurrection process from John A. T. Robinson's book, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology*.

After Sam Frost introduced the argument, it was adopted and used by Jack Scott in his 2008 conference speech in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Jack mentioned that Don Preston had used this argument in his six-part series of lessons on 1 Cor 15. Now that Sam Frost has left the Full Preterist camp, he has abandoned this argument that he once championed. But the other Collective Body advocates seem to still be using it, as evidenced by William Bell's recent article in *Fulfilled Magazine*. Note how William Bell explained this argument:

...Some **[IBV advocates]** have argued that the present passive verbs used in 1 Corinthians 15 refer to individual bodily resurrections throughout the redemptive era, such as with the son of the widow of Nain, Lazarus, and Dorcas. However, according to Greek authorities **[whom Bell does not name]**, this view cannot be sustained from the Greek language **[mere assertion here]**. Such a concept *is not* the meaning expressed in the present passive in 1 Corinthians 15 **[another bald assertion here]**. Rather, the present passive expresses a single progressive action with a beginning and an ending **[Bell cites or quotes no authoritative grammars to back up these assertions]**. The action may focus on the beginning, intermediate, or the consummation portions of the action, but the idea is that it is *one progressive continuous action*, not multiple scattered or intermittent actions occurring over time throughout history. [William Bell's recent article "Resurrection and the Kingdom" in the Summer 2013 issue of *Fulfilled Magazine*. Bracketed boldfaced material added by Stevens]

Since Bell did not bother to quote or even cite any reputable "Greek authorities" to back up his bald assertions and strawman arguments, I will do us the favor of providing a few Greek authorities to back up the Individual Body approach to this question. I suspect that by the time we are through with this podcast, we will see why the Collective Body advocates need to abandon this argument. We will show here that it is indefensible on grammatical, historical, and exegetical grounds.

Elsewhere in that same article in *Fulfilled Magazine*, William Bell clearly implied that those of us who take the Individual Body approach to 1 Cor 15 are **futurists**. Notice what he says here:

The IBD view cannot be correct ... **because it teaches a fulfillment of the resurrection body that extends beyond AD 70 through individual bodily resurrections at death**. In other words, **the eschaton is not complete and can never be complete** as long as there is another individual "kingdom body" to rise upon physical death! [William Bell's recent article "Resurrection and the Kingdom" in the Summer 2013 issue of *Fulfilled Magazine*. Boldface added by Stevens]

Even though I have explained this over and over to the Collective Body guys, they simply do not get the principle of a once-for-all resurrection event in AD 66, with

ongoing implications, applications, and benefits for all saints after AD 70. I explained this more than adequately in a recent podcast [**“Refuting Resurrection Errors”** July 28, 2013]. There are no more resurrections taking place after AD 70. We simply get our new immortal bodies that have been waiting for us in heaven ever since the eschatological resurrection event in the first century.

Since we do not go to Hades at physical death, we cannot be raised out of there. So resurrection does not apply to anyone after AD 70. No saints have gone to Hades since Hades was emptied at the first century resurrection, so there is no way any saints can ever be resurrected again after AD 70.

This argument by Bell and other Collective Body advocates is merely a strawman argument contrived for the express purpose of labeling the Individual Body View as **futurist**, so that they can divisively push us out of the Full Preterist movement and claim the Full Preterist label exclusively for themselves. I would encourage everyone listening to (or reading) this podcast to go back and listen to that podcast where we responded to their false accusations [**“Refuting Resurrection Errors”** July 28, 2013].

Let’s examine their “being raised” argument more closely

Here is the way Sam Frost introduced the argument on pages 47-48 of his book, *Exegetical Essays on the Resurrection of the Dead* (first edition, 2004):

The verbs Paul uses for ‘raised’ are present passive indicatives. Thus, accordingly, it is quite possible to translate vv. 15b,16 as, ‘who was not raised (aorist) if in fact the dead *are not being raised*. For, if the dead *are not being raised*, then neither has Christ **been** raised (perfect passive).’ Paul surely knows his verbs. He uses the aorist and perfect for Christ’s resurrection because the action is viewed as already transpired years ago. He never uses the present for Christ’s resurrection. But, he does consistently use the present for ‘the dead’ **being** raised. He does so throughout the entire chapter **except for places I will mention [notice this admission that there are exceptions, ees]**. [Sam’s footnote here: The present passive is also used in Lk 20:37; Mk 12:26. In Acts 26:8 we have HO THEOS NEKROUS EGEIREI where “raises” is present indicative and God is the subject. Resurrection in the NT is not *just* a future event, but an event already inaugurated and at work.] [Essays, pp. 47-48. Boldface and bracketed info added by Stevens]

I have spent many hours at several libraries researching the various Greek grammars on the proper translation of the Present Passive verbs like EGEIRO here in 1 Cor 15. I looked up all 56 of the **Present Passive Indicative** (3rd person plural) verbs in the New Testament, to see how many of them needed to be translated with the **“are being”** sense. What I found out is that the “are being” translation is only necessary in some cases where the context demands it. Rarely is it the only possible or only valid translation. Most occurrences are just as clear when translated without the “are being” sense.

But this poses a problem for the Collective Body View, as we can see in William Bell's article in *Fulfilled Magazine*: He claims that the idea of a **series of individual resurrection events** during the ministries of Jesus and the apostles (such as the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Nain, Lazarus, Tabitha, and Eutychus) "cannot be sustained from the Greek language," and that "such a concept *is not* the meaning expressed in the present passive in 1 Corinthians 15." Well, that is a nice claim for William Bell to make, but he needs to back it up with some grammatical substance, which he does not provide here in this article.

What we see here is that Bell is demanding that the present passive form of EGEIRO in 1 Cor 15 *can only be* correctly translated with the "**are being raised**" sense. He rejects any other possible translations of it, especially if they leave the door open for the Individual Body View to be correct. That is the same position Sam Frost took on this. The Collective Body guys *have to translate it that way*, or they cannot exclude the Individual Body interpretation as a possibility, nor exclude us from the Full Preterist movement. It is not an option that they can leave open. If any of the present passive forms of EGEIRO used in 1 Cor 15 do not have the "**are being raised**" sense, then their collective body interpretation of 1 Cor 15 vaporizes. I am glad to see that they admit the necessity of that translation for their view. Their Collective Body paradigm indeed demands this particular translation of EGEIRO (i.e., "are being raised"). It will not allow any other approach. Both William Bell and Sam Frost admit this and claim it.

Series of Individual Resurrections

However, we need to note here that the Individual Body View does not demand either approach. Our view works equally well with either translation: "are raised" or "are being raised." That is because the "are being raised" translation can support a series of individual resurrections going on throughout the transition period, which is the very position that we will advocate here in this paper. Here are a couple of texts which illustrate this very point (i.e., that there was a series of individual resurrections occurring throughout the transition period). Notice that both of these texts use the present passive form of the Greek verb EGEIRO ("are being raised"), the exact same form of EGEIRO that is used in 1 Cor 15 –

Matt. 11:5 *the* BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed and *the* deaf hear, ***the dead are raised up [EGEIRO, pres pas indic]***, and *the* POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.

Luke 7:22 And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you *have seen* and heard: *the* BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, and *the* deaf hear, ***the dead are raised up [EGEIRO, pres pas indic]***, *the* POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.

I would have no objection to these two verses being translated as "**are being raised**," since their context clearly indicates that there was a **series of individuals being raised** by Jesus during His earthly ministry. When it says "the dead are being raised," it is

referring to all those individual resurrections (e.g., the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus). Some dead ones **WERE being raised** at that very time. It was not a singular collective body that was “being raised” out of dead Judaism at that time, but rather a plural number of individuals being raised back out of Hades.

And since there are at least two cases of resurrection by the apostles during the transition period, it requires no stretch of the language to assert that 1 Cor 15 is also referring to a series of individuals “being raised” at the very time Paul made that statement. Paul is using the exact same form of the word EGEIRO that Jesus was, and there had been even more individual resurrections that had occurred since the time Jesus used that word about his own resurrections of several individuals. Do you catch the power of that?

We also need to remember that Jesus himself was raised from out of the same dead ones that were going to be raised at the Parousia. And at the resurrection of Jesus there were many individual saints raised who went into Jerusalem and visibly appeared to the folks there. All of the individual resurrections of Jesus (e.g., the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus), and His own individual resurrection and the “many” individuals who were raised with Him, plus the individual resurrection of Tabitha by Peter, could easily be under consideration here in 1 Cor 15 as proof that dead ones were currently (during the transition period) “**being raised.**”

Such a series of individual resurrections is exactly what is meant in Matthew 11:5 and Luke 7:22, both of which use the exact same form of EGEIRO that 1 Cor 15 uses. And since “many” more individuals had been raised out of the dead ones in Hades by the time Paul wrote to the Corinthians, there is no grammatical, historical, exegetical, or contextual justification for asserting that Paul can only be talking about a Collective Body resurrection here in 1 Cor 15. It can more reasonably be asserted that Paul is instead referring to that series of individual resurrections that were occurring throughout the ministries of Jesus and the Apostles. There was indeed an ongoing process (or series) of individual resurrections going on at that very time. That idea honors the linear or progressive sense of the present passive verb EGEIRO, without necessitating a Collective Body application of it. Do you catch the power of that?

The Greek grammars and commentaries that deal with the present passive form of EGEIRO in 1 Cor 15, do support the idea of some kind of resurrection activity going on at the time Paul wrote. However, the Collective Body advocates assume that there was only one possible kind of resurrection that could be spoken of as occurring at that time. They totally overlook, ignore, or reject the possibility that it is talking about a series of individual resurrections that were going on at the time Paul was writing. A few months after Paul wrote the Corinthians, he raised Eutychus back to life in Troas (Acts 20:12). So, both before and after this epistle was written, there was a series of individual resurrections occurring throughout the transition period.

Examples of Individual Resurrections:

There were three individuals raised in the Old Testament:

- 1 Kings 17:21-22 (Elijah raised the son of the widow of Zarephath)
- 2 Kings 4:34-35 (Elisha raised the only son of the Shunammite woman)
- 2 Kings 13:21 (dead body came to life when it touched Elisha's bones)

Matt. 11:5 *the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up [EGEIRO, pres pass ind], and the poor have the gospel preached to them. [see parallel account in Luke 7:22]*

Jesus raised others, and he himself was raised:

- Matt 9:24ff; Lk 8:41-56 (daughter of synagogue official Jairus) -- EGEIRO is used here (pres act imper, Lk 8:54)
- Lk 7:12ff (only son of the widow of Nain) -- EGEIRO is used here (aor pass imper, Lk 7:14)
- John 11:38-44 (Lazarus) -- EGEIRO is used here (aor act indic, Jn 12:1)
- Jesus Himself was raised back out of the dead ones in Hades
- Matt 27:52-53 (many were raised out of Hades at the time Jesus was raised)

Peter raised Tabitha (Dorcas) back to life:

- Acts 9:36-41 (Peter raised Tabitha)

Paul raised Eutychus back to life:

- Acts 20:12 (Paul raised Eutychus)

What are the Translation Options?

Advocates for the Collective Body View (CBV) focus significant attention on the phrase “the dead are not raised” found in 1 Cor 15:15-16. They note that the particular form of the Greek verb EGEIRO (raised) there in that phrase is a **Present Passive Indicative**. They suggest that this phrase should be translated as “the dead are not **BEING** raised.” They add the word “**BEING**” to the verb “raised” to make the Passive sense clearer, so that it seems to speak of a *process of resurrection* that was already underway and ongoing until the Parousia, at which time that process would be complete.

The commentaries state that there is a lot of confusion about whether Paul was using EGEIRO here as a Gnomic present, Progressive present, Iterative present, Aoristic present, Historical present, Futuristic present, Periphrastic present, or in some other sense. We will look at a couple of these options below (Gnomic and Futuristic).

Gnomic or Futuristic Present Tense Options

There is a contextual factor involved in the translation of the Present Passive Indicative (PPI) form of the verb EGEIRO (raise up). The PPI form can legitimately (and correctly) be translated in the **PUNCTILIAR** sense (i.e., “I am raised”) if the context demands it. Likewise, if the context indicates that the action of the PPI verb is **LINEAR**, then for

clarity sake, it should be rendered “I am BEING raised” with that ongoing progressive process idea. This is where we need to drill down into the context of First Corinthians 15 to see how these PPI forms of EGEIRO are being used (i.e., in a **punctiliar point-action event sense**, or in a **linear progressive ongoing process sense**).

Furthermore, even if these PPI forms of EGEIRO are being used in a **LINEAR** sense, it does not automatically guarantee that Paul is referring to a linear process of covenantal resurrection for a collective body happening throughout the transition period (like Sam Frost and Jack Scott and William Bell are asserting). It could simply be the case that Paul was referring to a series of individual **punctiliar** resurrection events (e.g., Lazarus, others raised by Jesus, Matt 27:52 group, Dorcas, Eutychus, etc) that were taking place in a continuous **linear** sequence throughout the transition period. That could be the case. It would certainly work acceptably in the context, and allow the Individual Body View to work with the **linear** progressive process translation of EGEIRO. However, it seems to me that the Collective Body advocates are trying to impose their **LINEAR** sense upon the translation of the PPI form of EGEIRO, NOT because the context indicates it, but rather because their Collective Body paradigm demands it.

The reason I say that, is because it is clear from the **FUTURE** passive indicative use of EGEIRO in the context (at 1 Cor 15:52) that the resurrection which “some” (e.g., 1 Cor 15:12, 29, 34, 35) there at Corinth were denying was NOT an ongoing linear process (i.e. “are BEING raised”) of covenantal dying-rising reciprocity for a collective body of saints. Instead, it appears that 1 Cor 15:52 is talking about a resurrection in the future at the Parousia which “some” there at Corinth (who had been influenced by Greek philosophy) were denying. This was a **PUNCTILIAR** (event) resurrection of the “dead ones” out of Hades at the future Parousia (i.e., souls of individual saints being raised out of Hades, just like we see described in Rev 20). That means that the punctiliar translation found in ALL the standard English translations is correct (“are raised”), since it can easily be understood in the **futuristic** punctiliar sense (i.e., “**are TO BE raised**”) or the **Gnomic** sense (a timeless truth that “**dead ones do rise**”) in conformity with the future tense use of EGEIRO here in 1 Cor 15:52.

The **FUTURE** tense use in verse 52 tells us that the “resurrection of the dead ones” (a plural number of individuals, not a singular collective body) was still in the future at the Parousia. It was NOT a linear process already going on at the time Paul wrote. This means that the PPI form of EGEIRO needs to be rendered with the **PUNCTILIAR** sense, in conformity with 1 Cor 15:52, as all the standard translations have done. They are simply following the sense of the context, as all translators should do. They believe like I do that the “**resurrection of the dead**” is a **PUNCTILIAR** event at the Parousia, not a **LINEAR** process going on throughout the transition period.

Also, while we are looking at 1 Cor 15:52, notice the contrast between the “**LIVING ONES**” who would be **changed**, versus the “**DEAD ONES**” who would be **raised**. The resurrection does not apply to the living saints, but rather only to the “dead ones.” There are two groups of saints here (not just one big collective body composed of both the living and dead saints), and it is **ONLY** the dead ones who are raised (not the living ones). The living saints are **CHANGED** (not raised). That alone nukes the collective

body application to the PPI form of EGEIRO here in this context of 1 Cor 15:52. That means that the PPI form of EGEIRO here in 1 Cor 15 should be translated with the PUNCTILIAR sense instead, as ALL the standard translations have correctly done (including Young's Literal Translation).

In addition to translating it as "are being raised" in the progressive sense, here are some other possible ways that the grammars suggest that it can be translated:

- Gnomic -- "the dead DO rise"
- Progressive -- "the dead are BEING raised"
- Iterative -- "the dead are rising"
- Historical -- "the dead are (already) raised"
- Futuristic -- "the dead are TO BE raised"

Collective Body advocates obviously prefer the Progressive sense, since their Collective Body paradigm demands it. But the context is the controlling factor here in determining which sense EGEIRO actually has here in 1 Cor 15.

And we Individual Body guys agree that the Progressive sense is a viable way of approaching it, even within the Individual Body View (IBV), since Paul could easily be referring to all the individual resurrections that had been taking place through the work of Christ and the apostles in their preaching ministries. The dead had been and WERE BEING raised at the very time Paul was writing. Peter had already raised **Tabitha** (Acts 9:40), and Paul himself would raise **Eutychus** not long after he wrote these words here in 1 Corinthians 15 (Acts 20:9). Jesus had raised the son of the widow of Nain (Lk 7:11-17), the daughter of Jairus (Mt 9, Mk 5, Lk 8), and **Lazarus** (John 12:1). And this latter text even uses the Aorist Active Indicative form of EGEIRO ("whom Jesus had raised out of the dead ones" referring to Lazarus). In Matthew 27:52-53 it mentions that many "were raised" (aor. pas. ind. of EGEIRO) and appeared in Jerusalem. So Paul could easily be referring to the sequence or series (or process) of all these individual resurrections that had been occurring throughout the ministries of Jesus and the Apostles: i.e., "**the dead ARE BEING raised**" (Matt 11:5; Lk 7:22). Several individuals had been raised. There was a **series of individual resurrections** that was occurring throughout the transition period. It does not have to refer to a collective body (the church) going through a process of resurrection at that time. It could just as easily refer to the process (series or sequence) of individual resurrections that was occurring all throughout the ministries of Jesus and the apostles. So, the IBV advocates would have no serious objection to the Progressive translation being used here for a group of individual resurrections.

And those individual resurrections (Lazarus, Tabitha, Eutychus, Jesus, et al) were further proof that the rest of the dead individuals **WOULD BE RAISED** (future passive indicative form of EGEIRO) at the Parousia (1 Cor 15:52). Note the future tense form of EGEIRO that is used here in 1 Cor 15:52. That does not fit the idea of a collective body at all, especially when Paul distinguishes between two groups of saints: the dead saints who would be raised, versus the living saints who would be changed (1 Cor. 15:51-52). This future resurrection that is mentioned here is NOT the whole collective body of all

living and dead saints. It is only the dead saints who would be "raised" (obviously the physically dead saints). The living saints would be "changed" (NOT RAISED) into their new immortal bodies (without experiencing physical death) and then caught up together with the resurrected dead into a meeting with Christ in the unseen spiritual realm (1 Thess 4:17). The living saints would have their bodies changed from visible mortal bodies into invisible immortal bodies. This bodily change of the living individual saints is mentioned in at least three other texts: 2 Cor 5:1-4, Phil. 3:21, and 1 Jn. 3:2. This resurrection of the dead and the change of the living was still future at the time Paul wrote (1 Cor. 15:52).

So, we Individual Body advocates have no problem taking EGEIRO in 1 Cor 15 as a *linear or progressive present*. It fits the individual body paradigm even better than it fits the collective body view, especially when we take the whole context into consideration (i.e., particularly verse 52 which refers to the resurrection of the dead as still future).

From the "individual body" perspective, there really is no objection to an on-going resurrection process throughout the transition period, as long as we understand what we mean by that (i.e., a process in which a **series of individuals** were "**being raised**"). For example, Christ was the first-fruit (1 Cor. 15:23,24). There were others (Matt. 27:52) who were "raised" at the same time Jesus was. We also have examples in the book of Acts where Peter and Paul raised some individuals from the dead (Tabitha and Eutychus). Those folks are good examples of how dead individuals (not a collective body) "were BEING raised" during the transition period. That idea removes the grammatical problem completely.

In conclusion, I think we can see that the "present passive indicative" verbs here in this chapter (1 Cor. 15), when translated correctly according to their context, do not teach an on-going "collective body" resurrection process. They might allow for the idea of a then-current ongoing **series of resurrections of individual saints**, but there is nothing in the verb tenses which would necessitate the idea of a "collective body" resurrection process going on at that time.

Again, the burden of proof is upon the collective body advocates to substantiate, not just the progressive linear sense of the PPI form of EGEIRO (which we IBV guys have no problem with), but rather that the process being referred to is a collective body resurrection process.

We Individual Body advocates have no problem accepting the linear process translation of EGEIRO, but we do not accept the Collective Body application to that process. So, the CBV guys need to prove that the collective body resurrection process is what is in view here, instead of a series (or process) of individual resurrections occurring throughout the transition period.

Down below I have appended the email replies that I received from several Greek scholars who commented on this question of how to translate the present passive form of EGEIRO here in 1 Cor 15. I emailed a bunch of Greek scholars and asked for their

help in understanding the meaning of EGEIRO here in this context. I received replies from five of them. They confirm that the “are being raised” translation is NOT the only valid way to translate it, and suggest a number of different ways to understand it. We do not have time here to go through all of their good comments, so I have copied it down below as additional grammatical support for the Individual Body approach that I am defending here. I would encourage you to spend some time evaluating their comments. I believe it will further clarify a number of areas that we did not have time to fully develop here in this session.

Well, that will just about do it for this session. I trust that you understood all of this. If not, be sure to send me an email and ask for clarification.

Thanks so much for listening.

We urgently need your support!

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The PPI form of the Greek verb EGEIRO

My Question to the Greek Scholars along with their Replies Below

Greetings in Christ, dear brothers! I need your Greek expertise regarding the Present Passive Indicative form of the Greek verb EGEIRO (egeirontai) as used in 1 Cor 15:15f. Here is my question:

A fellow preterist leader has suggested a different approach to the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15. The two verses he focuses on are verses 15 and 16 (NAS95), which say --

*Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not **[BEING]** raised. For if the dead are not **[BEING]** raised, not even Christ has been raised... [1 Cor. 15:15-16 NAS95]*

Notice the bracketed ALL CAPS word "**BEING**" that he inserts here in both verses to render the (3 pl Pres Pass Ind) form of EGEIRO as a present on-going process. Both verses have exactly the same form of EGEIRO (egeirontai).

He uses this inserted "being" rendering to teach that the resurrection (event) is actually an ON-GOING PROCESS of a "collective body" (the church) being raised out of the dead "collective body" of Judaism throughout the transition period until the Parousia (1 Cor. 15:23).

I have several Greek grammars, but I have been unable to find any lengthy discussion on the PPI verbs to help determine whether this "process" rendering ("are being raised") is correct.

It seems to me that it could have the sense of "are not [TO BE] raised" (futuristic present), rather than "are not [BEING] raised" (linear or progressive present).

This dear brother claims that Machen (sections 112 & 113) teaches this "being raised" (process idea), but after reading those sections of *Machen*, it does NOT seem to me that he supports this rendering "**in a majority of cases,**" nor in specific contexts where **the future occurrence** of the event is implied or expressed, as we have here in 1 Cor 15:52 --

*...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and **the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.** [1 Cor 15:52 NAS95]*

I have already checked *Werner's* 3-vol grammar, *Wallace's* "Beyond the Basics," *Robertson, Mounce, Machen, Dana & Mantey, Davis, Summers, Paine, Greenlee, Story,* and *Chapman & Shogren*. I also have BDAG, Louw & Nida, and the TDNT set.

Are you aware of any other grammars, lexicons, or textual commentaries which might deal specifically with this "being" (ongoing process) rendering of the PPI form of the verb EGEIRO? Which textual commentary on 1 Cor. 15 would you recommend?

Or you might simply give me a quick idea of what I should do to point out the possible fallacy of this "are [being] raised" PROCESS idea? Your help would be much appreciated.

Dr. Larry Hurtado

*Professor of New Testament Language, Literature & Theology,
New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland*

Two brief comments:

--For understanding ANYTHING about the wording of a given text, it's pretty essential to understand and respect some of the basics of how languages work, and that means some acquaintance with linguistics, esp. semantics. Basic principle: words ACQUIRE specific meaning IN SENTENCES, and SENTENCES are the fundamental semantic unit.

--In this context, it's rather clear that Paul's concern is to insist on a real and bodily resurrection of Jesus, and so a real and bodily resurrection of Christian dead (in future). He's not talking about the emergence of the church from Judaism or any such thing. So, it's totally inappropriate to try to insert such an idea on the spurious basis of some supposed inherent sense of the verb tense.

L. W. Hurtado, FRSE
Professor of New Testament Language, Literature & Theology
New College, University of Edinburgh
Edinburgh, Scotland

Dr. Reggie Kidd

Reformed Theological Seminary, Florida

Certainly, the progressive is a perfectly normal use of the PPI. It's just that descriptive, iterative, and gnomic are also perfectly normal uses ... **context dictates** ... and, for better or worse, all of us find our theology pushing us towards certain ways of construing a particular context.

In this case, if you happen to know on other grounds that resurrection is taking place, the progressive present makes sense. Apparently that's what's happening in your friend's reading. Seems to me, and I suspect, to most exegetes, that the question under discussion is whether resurrection is *ever* to be expected. In a word, Paul is expecting the Corinthians to see that Christ's particular resurrection implies a general resurrection. At this point in Paul's argument, Christ's resurrection is dated, and the general resurrection is not. **The dating of the general resurrection, it seems to me, is what comes into view at 15:52.** [boldface mine, ees]

Dr. Thomas Howe
Southern Evangelical Seminary – North Carolina

Paul uses the word ἐγείρω 20 times in 16 verses in 1 Corinthians. Of these instances, 19 occur in chapter 15. The 20 occurrences in 1 Corinthians are classified as follows:

6:14	ἠγειρεν	3 Sing. Aorist Act. Ind.
15:4	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:12	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:13	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:14	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:15	ἠγειρεν	3 Sing. Aorist Act. Ind.
15:15	ἠγειρεν	3 Sing. Aorist Act. Ind.
15:15	ἐγείρονται	3 Pl. Present Pass. Ind.
15:16	ἐγείρονται	3 Pl. Present Pass. Ind.
15:16	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:17	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:20	ἐγήγερται	3 Sing. Perfect Pass. Ind.
15:29	ἐγείρονται	3 Pl. Present Pass. Ind.
15:32	ἐγείρονται	3 Pl. Present Pass. Ind.
15:35	ἐγείρονται	3 Pl. Present Pass. Ind.
15:42	ἐγείρεται	3 Sing. Present Pass. Ind.
15:43	ἐγείρεται	3 Sing. Present Pass. Ind.
15:43	ἐγείρεται	3 Sing. Present Pass. Ind.
15:44	ἐγείρεται	3 Sing. Present Pass. Ind.
15:52	ἐγερθήσονται	3 Pl. Future Pass. Ind.

There can be no question that Paul is *not* referring to the resurrection of Christ as a process, since he uses either the Aorist or Perfect when referring to Christ's resurrection. However, when referring to the resurrection of the dead, he uses the Present passive form, except in one instance, 15:52, where he uses the Future passive indicative. **Since the Future tense does not admit of a progressive aspect, and since there is no reason to think that Paul is referring to some different resurrection than what he has been discussing, it seems contradictory for Paul to imply a progressive aspect in the other instances and then deny this in verse 52.** If Paul had meant to indicate a progressive aspect of the resurrection, he could have used a periphrastic future to express a progressive aspect in the future. (For a brief discussion of this, see Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 648.)

The use of the Future tense in verse 52 indicates that the resurrection is **an event** that will occur, **not a progression**. It is clear that the various aspects of any tense are not indicated morphologically. For example, Daniel Wallace lists several aspectual nuances for the Present tense, such as, the Progressive Present, in which the action is an on-going process; the Iterative Present, in which the action repeatedly happens; the Gnomic Present, in which the statement indicates a timeless fact; and the Futuristic

Present, in which the action is an event in the future. The aspects of these different uses of the Present tense cannot be determined by the form of the verb, since all of them are Present tense verbs. Rather, other factors must be considered in order to decide in which way a particular Present tense verb is being used.

Consequently, the simple fact that the verb ἐγείρω occurs in the Present tense is not sufficient to prove that it has a progressive nuance. Other factors must enter into the consideration of the use of the verb in its context in order to show that this is the case. For example, 1 Cor. 3:11 says, θεμέλιον γὰρ ἄλλον οὐδεὶς δύναται θεῖναι παρὰ τὸν κείμενον, ὃ ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς. “For another foundation no one is able to lay besides the one existing, which is Jesus Christ.” The verb δύναται is a *Present Passive indicative*, but this fact certainly does not indicate that the laying of Jesus Christ as the foundation is a process. Rather, it is a **timeless fact** [Gnomic present]. In 1 Cor. 12:8 Paul says, ὃ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδεται λόγος σοφίας, “For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit . . .” Here the word δίδωμι is a Present Passive indicative. However, the giving of a spiritual gift to a believer is not a process. Rather, **it is an event**. In 1 Cor. 15:42-44 the word σπείρω is used four times, in each instance it is a *Present Passive indicative*. Yet it is absurd to think that Paul is saying “it is in the process of being sown a perishable body,” or “it is in the process of being sown in dishonor.” Since each occurrence of σπείρω in these verses is used in parallel with the Present Passive indicative use of ἐγείρω, this implies that the raising is not a process, but an event. “It is sown . . . it is raised.” It seems patently absurd to say, “It is in the process of being sown . . . it is in the process of being raised.” Additionally, it seems equally absurd to say, “It is sown . . . it is in the process of being raised.” Such a change in aspect disrupts the parallelism by which Paul is endeavoring to make the contrast between the two events.

These examples show that simply because a word appears in the Present tense does not prove that it indicates progressive action. In order to prove this point, one must have other evidence, such as lexical information, contextual information, and grammatical information. Each of these categories affect the form of the verb to **indicate its aspect** in a given instance. For example, some actions cannot be progressive simply because of the kind of actions they indicate. Death is not a progressive action. Death is a point, and event. When we talk about someone dying, we are using this term analogically. What we mean is that someone’s health is declining so that they are approaching the point of death. But death itself is an event that occurs in a moment. **The kind of action indicated by the verb will affect its aspect**. Contextual information is also important and will affect the kind of aspect that a verb indicates. Theologically and philosophically speaking, existence for God is not a process. When we say “God exists” we cannot mean that God is involved in some process. God exists in an eternal, unchanging present moment. So, even though we use a present tense verb, it cannot indicate a process when used of God. Grammatically, a present tense verb can be used to indicate a past completed act, such as when it is used in a Periphrastic Perfect construction. Here the present tense form of the verb “to be” cannot indicate a progressive action because of the grammatical construction. [boldface mine, ees]

Dr. Richard Gould
Houghton College – Houghton, NY

I can give you no definitive resolution to your question about the present passive indicative in I Cor. 15.15 & 16. Here are some comments, however:

1. Your friend is certainly correct that "are being raised" is a possible translation. *Machen*, although he does seem to encourage such a rendering, also expresses caution about always translating it as progressive. Machen's main point seems to be that there is **a distinction in Greek between present activity and a present state**, whereas the English expression "are raised" can be ambiguous (without a context). Does your friend insist on translating all "ppi's" with the "being"?
2. I am inclined to agree with you that adding "being" here with "raise" probably does an injustice to the text, but with a verb like "save" the addition is helpful in letting us see that salvation is a process consisting of several stages from conversion through sanctification to glorification. I am not sure just what the stages would be for being raised. Would such a view lend support for the Roman Catholic notion of purgatory or limbo?
3. Are "the dead" a fixed group or a group which keeps increasing? Does the process refer to an individual believer or to the changing inclusive group? I am inclined to see the "ppi" referring to a general timeless truth [Gnomic present] rather than an ongoing process (that is only partially completed).
4. I tried checking several commentaries but did not find much that seemed to address your concern. *Meyer* (one of the standard 19th century commentators who often goes into a lot of detail) was silent on this passage. The one commentary that did specifically address this issue was Vol. 32 in *The Anchor Bible* (by William F. Orr and James A. Walther). Their conclusion seems to favor your friend, but they do allow for the possibility of your view or of my view:

"The present here is taken to be linear. It is possible, of course, that it has a futuristic turn; such an interpretation would involve an intensive analysis of Paul's eschatology (some of which must be examined later in this chapter). It may also have aoristic force (since there is no present aorist form in first-century Greek); this implies 'the dead [as a matter of principle] are not being raised .' The fact that Christ has been raised, however, seems to push Paul into stating what is (as a present experience) going on." [*Anchor Bible*, pp. 324-5]

5. William Douglas Chamberlain's *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, (pp. 70-72) has quite an extended section on the possible ways of understanding a present tense. [boldface mine, ees]

Dr. Thomas Edgar

Professor of New Testament, Capital Bible Seminary

Regarding the PPI (present passive indicative) in 1 Cor 15:15, 16.

If I understand this correctly the argument of this person is based on the present tense as supporting a process. However, I would think that anyone familiar with the Greek text of the New Testament would realize that the tense of the verb alone cannot bear all this exegetical weight. **Since this "process view" of the resurrection is basically unheard of (I could find no reference to it in a recent major work on the resurrection) and since there is a long tradition otherwise; that the resurrection is an event, this tense cannot bear all this weight in any case.** Since the present tense could not bear this weight in any case, then it does not in this particular verse. **The church has always considered the resurrection as an event rather than some process as described herein.**

1. Many people have been taught that the present tense is continuous action however this is not so. The various grammars, including Blass DeBrunner, Porter, and Wallace seem to agree that the present tense basically describes action that is occurring. **The duration of action is not included in the tense itself but must be derived from the context.** I would say that the present tense in New Testament Greek is similar to the English, much more than is usually admitted.

2. The present tense in the construction used in these verses often indicates a general principle. It does not refer to an occurring action or process in each individual case but is used to give the durative idea in the sense of numerous individuals being raised [iterative] or, a principle that is on going [gnomic]. One way this can be seen is by substituting other tenses in this construction. Of the six basic Greek tenses, other than the present tense which is used here, there are four tenses referring in the indicative to the past, and the future tense. If we used any one of the four tenses referring to the past; that is, the perfect, aorist, pluperfect, or Perfect, they would all refer to the resurrection as past when Paul wrote. We can see this by an English translation using some form of the Greek tense; namely, "If the dead have been raised," or, "if the dead were raised." Thus, this statement would be referring to whether or not the dead had been raised in the past. The other tense (the future tense) would have a meaning such as, "If the dead will be raised." The future would, in this case, be referring to a specific event in the future. The four tenses indicating the past would be referring to a specific event in the past. Thus, the present tense is the only tense that would refer to an ongoing [iterative] or a general principle [gnomic].

3. However, as with any tense or grammatical construction **there are several possibilities of meaning but the context is determinative.** This does not mean the context in a vague or very general sense but the specific context. In this case the context is very helpful. There are no textual variants that have an effect on the issue discussed here. The construction is very similar to a first-class condition. Paul commonly uses a conditional statement to summarize what he has been saying to this

point or to restate an argument. Thus when he says, "If then the dead are not being raised," and, "for if the dead are not being raised," he is merely stating the proposition to which he has been referring as the protasis to a conditional sentence. In other words, these conditional statements are merely restatements of the proposition that was being discussed in verse 12; that some were saying, "that there is no resurrection of the dead," and in verse 13, "and if there is no resurrection of the dead." **These passages are indicating that some in Corinth were denying that there is such a thing as a resurrection of the dead, not that they were denying that there is no process resurrection somehow connected with Judaism. Furthermore, whether or not there was a process type of resurrection connected with Judaism would have nothing to do logically with whether or not Christ has been raised. But Paul says that this statement or concept of some in Corinth that there is no resurrection from the dead would logically rule out the resurrection of Christ. Thus, this statement has to be referring to the general principle [gnomic] of a resurrection from the dead rather than to any specific event or to a process. If there is no such thing as a resurrection from the dead, then neither has Christ been raised.**

4. We can see not only from other verses but from **verse 24** that Christ's resurrection was an event. **Verse 23** which states that each one will be resurrected in his own order makes it specific that this is referring to an event, and "those who belong to Christ" will be resurrected at a specific time; that is, an event. This perspective continues through the rest of this paragraph down through verse 28. **There is nothing in the rest of this chapter that even implies a process view of the resurrection somehow tied in with Judaism or their thinking. One of the clearest statements of course is in 1Corinthians 15:51, and 52 where it refers to the fact that Christians will be changed; that is, resurrected in and the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet.**

5. In conclusion, the present tense does not indicate what this individual has stated; that is, that this refers to a process type of resurrection neither does it in any way connect this with Judaism or anything like that. The normal use in this construction of the present tense would refer to a general principle. The general principle is what fits in the context. Whether or not the resurrection is a process that is connected with Judaism does not have any reference to the logic or to the context of this paragraph and Paul's discussion. Finally, there is sufficient discussion in this chapter to make it clear that the resurrection is an event, particularly the resurrection of those who belong to Jesus Christ. Although it may be possible to interpret this as a futuristic present, there is nothing in the context to really indicate the future. In addition, the future would make it refer to a specific eschatological event. Thus the discussion would concern whether or not there is a specific resurrection for Christians that is to take place in the future rather than to refer to the general principle of whether or not there is a resurrection. This would not correlate well with the logical argument of Paul. Whether or not there is a future resurrection prophesied would have no logical effect on whether or not Christ could be raised; however, whether or not there is such a thing as a resurrection of the dead would logically impinge on whether or not Christ was raised. Thus, not only is the process view all but impossible in this context, it is also unlikely that this should be interpreted as a future.

This idea that the present is always or usually referring to a continuous action or a process is an error based on beginning Greek. The present refers to something occurring or ongoing and can be only momentary. The BEING in this construction, if it has a durative thrust, is durative in that it refers to **individual after individual [iterative]**. It is not durative with reference to each individual; thus, it often does, and does here, refer to a general principle [gnomic].

I hope this is been helpful and as usual it is helpful to me to think these things through once again.

Sincerely,
Dr. Thomas R. Edgar
Professor of NT, Capital Bible Seminary