

THE RESURRECTION ON TRIAL

J = Judge (Stephen)

P = Prosecution (Neill)

D = Defence (Campbell)

W1, W2, W3 etc = witnesses (Em/Nat/whoever else gets assigned!)

(Pre-trial banter between P & D, just to each other)

P: Make a deal with me now and I'll swing it in your favour, give your client a fighting chance of surviving beyond the end of the decade

D: My client will outlast you by an extremely long time. I'll play this one with honesty

P: Honesty, ha! This is a law court! Anyway, you don't really believe all this resurrection crap is real do you?

D: Evidence is evidence, my friend

P: Evidence?! I look forward to cross examining all your loony, God bothering witnesses. Hmm. Witnesses to God? Where have I seen them before? Oh yes, at my door on a Saturday morning trying to get me to sell my soul for a free magazine.

D: You have a soul?! Any way, it's the event of the resurrection that's on trial here not some weird branch of... Oh, the judge is off his coffee break. Maybe that is an apocalyptic statement!

P: Well here we go then...

J: All rise for the justice of the court, the most learned and wise presiding judge, the honourable Stephen Trebilco... er... me! *(get everyone standing!)* Thank you thank you *(ad lib if poss)* Counsel, present yourselves and the matter in hand for the benefit of the jury – that lot over there.

P: Your honour, may it please the court, Mr Neill Ballantyne, persecuting, I mean prosecuting, representing my client Heath E Scepticism, oh I'm sorry that's healthy scepticism in the matter of the resurrection. We assert that the alleged event never occurred and seek to provide logical alternatives explanations for this ludicrous fairy tale.

D: Your honour, Mr. Campbell Clark, defending all Christians everywhere since 33AD. May it please the court that I defend the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

J: Thank you counsellors. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury today we present the case of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Evidence will be provided from history, scripture and witnesses. I urge you to listen without prejudice or preconception before deciding, beyond all reasonable doubt, whether the alleged event is reality or fantasy. The prosecution and defence have been bound under oath in my chambers to speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth which may be a challenge in a case where the main question has to be "what is truth?"

It is assumed for the sake of this court that since we swear on the Bible to tell the truth that this particular book contains the truth within it. Our trial today is not regarding the reliability of scripture as historical fact. That is a given in this court. My hope is that reason, evidence, wisdom and truth will prevail. Gentlemen, present your cases...

P: The resurrection of a human being from death? Impossible, insane and unbelievable. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you will hear my learned friend offer so called evidence from half-baked, hallucinating, hippies who think they saw something that they actually did not. They will try to convince

you that this Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled ancient prophecies by rising from the dead. I propose that the event to which they refer be given its true status along side Santa Claus and the Easter bunny. The emotionally based delusions are as real as sightings of Elvis and, as my client Mr Scepticism will be quick to point out, should be relegated to the realm of bedtime stories for children - those least able to rationalise.

D: Learned friends, Jesus Christ was dead and buried according to the scriptures and on the third day was raised to life. I will present reliable witnesses, exhibits from the scene, historical accounts and sound reasoning, on which you must not only accept the reality of this event but find that you can reasonably put your faith in it! Ladies and gentlemen, I credit you with the ability to wisely and judiciously come to the only possible conclusion in this matter – that the resurrection was and is an actual event. Jesus prophesied it, then fulfilled it and many witnessed it. Today millions of people have claimed an experience of and with Jesus Christ that has changed their lives for the good. A dead man could not do that. We hear, “Jesus healed me”, “Jesus saved me”, “Jesus appeared to me” in testimony throughout history. I implore you to question how a dead man could do that. He is risen. The resurrection is real.

P: Let’s begin. I have three major objections to the possibility of Jesus’ resurrection. Or perhaps I should say, three alternative explanations with which we can demythologize this ridiculous claim of Christianity.

Firstly, jury members, have you considered the possibility that Jesus never rose from the dead because he was never actually dead? Perhaps it was a hoax. A scam. A lie.

D: Objection, that’s pure conjecture, your honour!

J: Over-ruled at this stage counsel, let’s at least hear parts two and three, they may relate.

P: Thank you your honour, secondly, this alleged resurrection can be explained by a plan of Jesus’ followers. I propose that they stole the body of Jesus, not quite dead, of course, though understandably a bloody mess, and revived him in a private location before his dramatically staged reappearances.

D: Give me a break!

J: Are you asking for recess, Mr Clark?

D: Er, no your honour, I apologise for my exasperation.

J: Counsel we are dealing with apologetics here, not apologies!

D: Yes m’Lord.

J: Continue Mr Ballantyne, I hate incomplete trilogies.

P: Very good your honour. My third point is quite simply that the “empty tomb” was empty not because of a supernatural event but because the authorities in question were trying to squash a rebellion and took the body themselves and disposed of it. Messy business, all that crucifixion and it was holiday season after all.

J: And do you have any witnesses to call to confirm these theories?

P: Not at this point, m’Lord. I feel it is only right to allow the defending parties a fighting chance to try and prove this resurrection.

J: Very good. Defence.

D: Thank you. I would like to refute these arguments in turn.

Firstly the supposition that Jesus was not dead. Let's examine the evidence – something sorely lacking in my colleagues arguments. I would like to call Mr Ballantyne to the stand in order to represent scepticism.

J: Most unusual protocol, Mr Clark.

D: Permission to sustain the request your honour. I believe that my colleague will be a helpful representative of all such sceptics, cynics and atheists.

J: Sustained. Go ahead. (*Prosecution stands in witness box*)

D: Let me ask a question. Mr Ballantyne, do you accept that today we are arguing the case of Jesus having risen from the dead?

P: Of course.

D: Then must we not first have assumed that Jesus was completely and utterly dead?

P: I suppose so.

D: Yet you claim in objection number one that Jesus was not really killed, just hurt a little.

P: It's possible.

D: Is it? Let's look at the evidence.

Firstly, Roman soldiers were not historically renowned for their gentleness towards those they were instructed to execute. Tell me, Mr Ballantyne, what would have been the punishment for a Roman soldier who failed to carry out his job correctly?

P: Flogging, perhaps execution.

D: So, do we really think a soldier would let this Jesus, a famous rebel in their eyes, be taken down from the cross before he was confirmed as dead? A validated historical document known as the gospel according to John states, and I quote, "when they came to Jesus..." (to speed along his death by breaking his legs causing him to suffocate more quickly) "...and found that he was DEAD ALREADY, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony and his testimony is true". I believe this comes from John chapter 19, verses 32-35. Now tell me, Mr Ballantyne, what does this tell you?

P: That they took him down from the cross because he was a mess and they were in a hurry?

D: No, my friend, I hold here a medical report which categorically states that being stabbed at this angle with a spear causing a sudden rush of both blood and water is medical evidence of a ruptured heart. On top of that, Jesus had endured 39 lashes of a Roman flogging prior to his crucifixion which finished most victims off. Jesus was dead. Deceased. No more. He was a dead Messiah. It is also reported that Jesus said: "It is finished", breathed his last and gave up his spirit. Common phenomena associated with death, I think you'll agree!

P: That's hearsay, your honour.

J: Actually I believe it is written...

P: Well, perhaps he was very sick but those disciples were fishermen, they probably brought several drowned men back to life in their time through CPR and mouth to mouth resuscitation. It wasn't so much a resurrection as a convenient revival.

D: Again I'd like to point out that failing to do a proper job may have resulted in a Roman guard losing his life. Do you honestly believe that a bunch of bewildered, grieving followers, convinced that this was the end of their teacher's life, could sneak past a Roman guard, move a huge stone and steal a body without anyone noticing?

P: But your own scriptures state that the Jewish officials gave the Romans soldiers a large sum of money, and the promise of safety from their superiors, to admit that the body had been stolen by the disciples.

D: Exactly. They bribed them to make up a story. Anything other than having to face up to a real resurrection. You will find that the huge stone which sealed the tomb and the Roman guards were posted at the tomb on Pilate's orders to stop a potential robbery. The empty tomb cannot be explained by theft. This is a cover up story created by the chief priests, as documented by the highly regarded historian and physician Luke in his narrative, chapter 27:64 to 28:15. I believe the report ends that this was a rumour circulated by the Jews as an alternative to the truth that a resurrection had occurred.

As you represent the sceptics, Mr. Ballantyne, you must see the complete lack of integrity from these corrupt men! It would take nothing to discredit the Pharisees and hypocrites as completely incapable of holding together an agreement between themselves about trivial issues like which fish are kosher, let alone a convincing explanation for the resurrection. If a story is invented to hide the truth then the truth must differ from the contents of that story. I thought this would be basic logical principles amongst you sceptics. Their story should be completely disregarded by the jury.

The evidence for the resurrection still stands. The tomb where Jesus was buried was undeniably empty.

P: Ah yes, the empty tomb. According to who? A few delirious women and fanatics? Got those witnesses have you?

D: I would like to call to the stand Mary Magdalene. Mary, you are under oath to tell the truth. What happened to you on the first Sunday morning following the execution of Jesus of Nazareth?

W1: I went to the tomb to see my Lord. I was taking extra spices to make it smell better, the heat causes problems, you know. I was worrying along with the other women about how to get the guards to move the stone for us.

D: Why were there guards there Mary?

W1: Apparently the leaders were worried we would steal the body and pretend Jesus was alive and they wanted to stop that happening.

D: So it was an effective guard that you were concerned about?

W1: Yes. I'm just a woman. How would they treat me? Would they help? Anyway, when I got there an angel or something rolled back the stone and sat on it.

P: I must interject, your honour, an angel rolled the stone away, did he?

W1: Yes.

P: Anyone else see this?

W1: The guards. They were clearly shaken up. They were scared and fell back from the tomb.

P: The big burly Roman soldiers that you were afraid of, they were scared?

W1: Yes.

J: Please wait your turn to cross examine the witness counsel.

D: Thank you, your honour. So Mary, what happened next?

W1: Well, the angel of the Lord, I thought he was a gardener at first, said, "Jesus who was crucified is not here. He is risen, like he said. Go and tell the disciples."

D: And how did this make you feel?

W1: Excited, scared, bewildered, joyful. I grabbed the other girls and we were running to tell Peter when Jesus himself appeared.

D: And how did you react?

W1: I grabbed his feet, hugging him. I was amazed and could hardly believe it. I didn't want to let him go! He was dead but here he was alive again. He told me to let go and not cling on to him because he had to go to his Father. And also to show himself to the boys

D: And how did the disciples react when you told them you had seen Jesus alive again?

W1: They didn't believe me at first. They said it was nonsense. But Pete 'n' Johnny were a bit more interested. They knew I wouldn't make it up. They raced over to see for themselves. But they still didn't know what to believe until they saw Jesus for themselves a bit later.

D: Thanks Mary. Your witness.

P: Okay, so what did you see exactly? I have 4 different records here.

Matthew says you saw the "angel of the Lord" roll the stone away and freak out the guards and then you saw Jesus.

Mark says a young man in white was sitting beside the stone then you saw Jesus.

Luke says you saw 2 men gleaming in white before Jesus appeared and

John says these two men in white asked why you were crying, that you said you were upset because you didn't know where Jesus was and then you had a chat with someone you thought was the gardener, which turned out to be Jesus but you didn't even recognise him at first.

A bit mixed up weren't you Mary? Old demons coming back to haunt you were they? A screw loose?

D: Judge, he's harassing my witness.

J: Sustained. Prosecution, is there a question you need answering?

P: Yes, m'lord. Mary, did you actually see Jesus Christ in the flesh for yourself or are all these reports an account of your confusion?

W1: I saw Jesus. Alive and well. I saw him, I touched him and I told the disciples. I am not crazy, I did not imagine it. It was real and if you bring in the stupid soldiers they'll tell you that angels were present at the tomb.

P: Clearly seeing things.

J: The jury will strike that comment from the record. Eye witness accounts are integral to our hearing. The jury will decide on the evidence of what they hear not the opinion of the prosecution. Defence continue.

D: I think it's clear that no matter the order of events, Mary did have an angelic encounter, she was upset at finding Jesus missing but she definitely, as recorded by all four writers, saw the risen Jesus, was told to tell the disciples the good news and tried to hang on to Jesus for some time.
I would now like to call my second witness, your honour. Simon Peter. (*Prosecution returns to first position and Simon Peter enters the witness stand*).

J: Simon Peter, please take the witness stand. Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

W2: Duh! The truth is all I know since that day.

D: Simon, could you tell the court what happened after the crucifixion of your teacher and friend, Jesus?

W2: My Lord

J: Yes?

W2: I mean Jesus. He's my Lord, m'Lord. And Saviour. Anyway, I wasn't sure about all that at first. Had a bit of trouble believing it myself - all this God in the flesh stuff. But I was eventually convinced that Jesus is the Son of the Living God, the chosen one, the Messiah promised long ago.

P: Objection! Must we have a devotional outpouring, your honour? We are supposed to be dealing with facts not preaching.

J: Sustained. Counsel, advise your witness to answer straightforward questions and please ask some!

D: Yes, your honour. Peter, what were you doing on the third day from the death of Jesus?

W2: I was pretty depressed. Trying to figure out if I wanted to go back into my fishing career now Jesus had gone. I was just waiting around with my fellow fishermen when the women turned up.

D: Which women? The same as you've seen here today?

W2: Yes, Mary Magdalene - and James' mum, also called Mary, Joanna, the wife of one of Herod's officials and Salome.

D: And do you trust them?

W2: Yes. At one time I wouldn't have listened to Mary but she became a truthful and devoted follower after Jesus sorted her out. She is very trustworthy and helpful.

D: What did she and the other women say when they got to you?

W2: They said they'd gone to the tomb where Jesus was buried and were wondering how they were going to roll the stone away but when they got there the stone was already rolled away and Jesus was gone. A couple of men in white turned up and said: "Why are you looking for the living among the dead? Jesus is risen. Remember he said he would suffer, be killed and rise again?" Then the women came and told us. Mary Magdalene seemed to have had a conversation with the risen Jesus himself first though. She tried to hold on to him, she said, but Jesus told her to come straight to me.

D: Ah yes, Jesus himself had stated that he would suffer, be killed and on the third day rise again. When did he tell you that?

W2: Several times. The first time he started to talk about suffering, getting killed and rising again was just after I'd blurted out that I thought he was the Son of God, the Messiah – chosen one who would sort us all out. I tried to tell him I wouldn't let the suffering and killing happen - and he told me that Satan was behind what I said - but that Jesus was praying for me. The last time he spoke about it was during our Passover meal. A bit of a dampener on the occasion really. He gave us some wine and said it was his blood spilled out for the forgiveness of our sins. Definitely the way to ruin a party.

D: And was Jesus known to speak false prophecy?

W2: No. Everything he said came true. He couldn't help but speak truth.

D: And how did you respond to the women when they said he was alive again?

W2: Well, Tommy wasn't having any of it. He thought it was madness, wouldn't believe it 'til he saw it for himself. At first I thought it was nonsense but I had to know for myself. Me 'n' Johnny ran over to the tomb, had a bit of a race actually, and it was like they said - empty. Johnny beat me there but he wouldn't go in. I went straight in though. We saw the linen burial cloths lying there with the head cloth neatly folded up next to the linen strips. Then I wondered what had happened until I saw him for myself later.

D: You hadn't stolen the body yourself then?

W2: I hadn't been anywhere near the tomb. I was too mad at myself for letting Jesus down earlier, saying I didn't know him, and then I needed to grieve. I ain't a grave robber. I was too cheesed off with him for leaving us anyway. What would I have wanted to do with his stinking body?

D: If it pleases your honour, I would like to submit to the court item 1 from the scene, the grave clothes as found by Simon Peter. (*Hands over folded sheet*). These grave clothes were found in the tomb. They had previously been wrapped around Jesus dead body with about 60kg of spices and burial material. Yet the head cloth used for wrapping around the head was neatly folded. Not the work of anyone in a hurry to remove a body discretely under the nose of Roman guards. Thank you, Peter. Your witness Ballantyne...

P: Peter. Hmmm. Bit of a sceptic yourself aren't you?

W2: Not any more.

P: Why so convinced? Brainwashed?

D: Objection!

J: Be careful Mr Ballantyne.

P: Okay, but Peter you can't really believe a bunch of delirious women can you?

W2: Well, I saw for myself that what they said was true.

P: And when were you finally convinced of the resurrection? It wasn't when they told you, was it? And Mary's a bit mad isn't she? Crazy by demons. Surely you didn't believe her?

W2: Well, I did look into what Mary said, I mean she was a different woman after Jesus had healed her and everything. Anyway, Jesus turned up on Sunday night through locked doors too! It wasn't just her story. Jesus appeared to us guys himself. Kept turning up, like a ghost except he was real.

P: Ah, a trick.

W2: No, it happened a few times. A week later when Tommy was with us, Jesus turned up again and let Thomas touch his hands 'n' feet. That convinced him it really was Jesus himself. He had wounds, scars from being nailed to the cross. And then he turned up again on the water's edge. I'd gone out in my boat and hadn't caught much when this man said: "Try your net on the other side of the boat". I did and caught loads of fish. Then we realised it was Jesus. He'd done that for us before – given us great tips on where to fish. Johnny yelled, "It's the Lord!" I realised he was right and jumped in the water to get to Jesus ASAP. Then he made us a barbecued fish brekkie. And we had a bit of a heart to heart about things and he made me feel a lot better.

P: And it never occurred to you that all this was a dream, a ghost, a hallucination? Isn't it true that your grief was so overwhelming that you started to see things?

D: Leading question, your honour!

J: One question at a time and keep it factual please.

P: Ok. Were you taking any medication at the time Peter?

W2: No.

P: No "herbal remedies" for the stress?

W2: No.

P: Is it possible that you were hallucinating?

W2: Not unless Johnny, Jimmy, Tommy and the rest were seeing the same thing at the same time.

P: So you're saying this was not just your experience.

W2: No. There were at least ten times he appeared to us all together. And it happened repeatedly over the next 40 days or so. And he was as real as you 'n' me. He ate, drank, you could touch him. It wasn't a ghost!

P: Yes or no will do. Ok Clarky, your witness again.

D: Thanks. So, Peter, do you concur that Jesus, after his death, somehow appeared to yourself, the ten remaining disciples, Thomas - the famed doubter - a sceptic you might say, to James and the rest of the apostles, and according to your fellow apostle Paul to five hundred people all at the same time?

W2: Yes absolutely. I mean me 'n' Paul have had our differences but we agree on the resurrection. We have both seen the risen Jesus.

D: Thank you, that's all. *(Peter leaves, Paul comes in.)* I call my next witness, Paul. Do you also swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

W3: I am swearing on some of my own writing here. I'm hardly going to change my mind.

D: Paul, what is your experience of this Jesus of Nazareth?

W3: Well, I was pretty anti Jesus to be honest. I was on my way to kill a bunch of Christians.

D: Wait. You were going to kill them? So you were hostile to the rumours of Jesus' resurrection?

W3: Correct. I was defensive of Judaism and thought these believers were mad. And it made me mad. I wanted to kill them. Anyway, we'd got rid of one of them, Stephen, and I was on my way down to Damascus to make more of them prisoners when there was a flash of light and a voice saying: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" I fell on the ground, I was so shaken and I asked who it was. The voice said: "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." The guys travelling with me heard it too but didn't see anyone, like I did. When I got up I couldn't see until Ananias came to pray for me three days later. Jesus had told him about me and what had happened and he came over, laid hands on me and told me that Jesus, who had appeared to me on the road, was going to heal me and fill me with the Holy Spirit. It was awesome. I was a changed man.

D: So you heard and saw the risen Jesus and had regular conversations with him after this and many visions?

W3: Yep!

D: And could you please read for us what you wrote to the church in Corinth, Chapter 15:3-8 and 12-21?

W3: Certainly.

³For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. ¹²But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

¹³If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

¹⁵More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised.

¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either.

¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.

¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹

⁹If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

²⁰But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

D: All yours, Ballantyne!

P: A flash of light you say? Did it stun you? Knock you to the ground?

W3: Yes

P: You were struck by lightning, weren't you, Paul?

W3: No!

P: And you were in shock. Not a bad time to start holding conversations with your own imagination. As for all this if the dead are raised nonsense, it's a bit complicated isn't it? I don't think you know what you're talking about! But you're right. You are to be pitied for believing. That's all I have.

D: Paul, have you ever been struck by lightning?

W3: Never.

D: Have you ever suffered mental illness?

W3: No. In fact I was more out of my mind before meeting Jesus. I was blinded by my rage. Meeting Jesus changed all that and I knew peace, joy, love for people.

D: And is it true that following this event you started several churches in Asia and Europe?

W3: I went as far as Rome, Malta, Cyprus, Turkey and Spain with the good news that Jesus has risen. In some places I found believers already. Jesus had been doing the rounds a bit himself.

D: Thanks Paul. Now I would like to call my next witnesses. Two disciples who walked along the road to Emmaus, having a conversation with a stranger, who later broke bread and revealed himself to be the risen Jesus...

P: Your honour, I believe that my learned friend intends to call forth every one of the apostles and the five hundred witnesses and more historical figures than we can cope with. Do we have to hear from them all?

J: Not if you concede that each witness is going to concur with previously presented evidence and have the same story?

P: So conceded. In fact, I wonder if Mr. Clark can produce any reliable witnesses at all.

J: Ok, I think we need to sum up, gentlemen.

P: Your honour, ladies and gentlemen, I could go to great lengths to discredit these witnesses, as lunatics and fanatics. Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter, Paul. Not reliable witnesses. All emotionally unstable at the time of their supposed sightings. And an empty tomb? So what. Any numbers of explanations for that. Bribery, robbery, an earthquake perhaps shifting the boulder. We are not even sure that Jesus was dead. My clever friend has tried to convince you with medical jargon and shock tactics but my client remains sceptical. Deluded and confused, these "witnesses" to the resurrection have done nothing but create a very big lie called religion which we all know is simply the opiate of the masses. There is no hard evidence for this event, only rumours, questionable testimonies and wishful thinking. Relegate the resurrection to fairyland where it belongs.

D: Your honour, jury members, in addition to eye witness testimony, documents of said events, and an empty tomb, we cannot ignore the principles of cause and effect in this case. If we look at effect we know that the true church has existed for over 2000 years. Millions of people believe in this event. People were willing to give their lives for their belief in Jesus' resurrection. Who would give themselves up to the lions, torture, beheading, unless they were thoroughly convinced of the reality of what they stood for. Even to this day you will find the most hostile to the good news having revelations and visions of this living Christ. The fanatical Muslim converts because Jesus has appeared to them, the atheist beholds a miracle and believes. Something caused this string of effect. Add to that the complete transformation in the lives of my witnesses, having seen, touched and eaten breakfast with Jesus Christ – a transformation which has resulted in a message of hope, love and peace for millions, inspired social care, freedom movements and the centrality of love. These things do not happen by themselves. If Jesus has died and stayed dead, his teachings would have died with him as his lamenting followers gave up. If the resurrection had not occurred there would have been no conviction amongst the apostles, no church, no continuation of conversions, no belief in Jesus' ability to fulfil his own prophecies and therefore no faith in him left. I urge you to rule out the ridiculous suggestions made by my colleague that everyone who saw, heard or touched the risen Jesus was deluded, hallucinating or tripping. I urge you to discard theories that someone stole Jesus body. Had the ruling authorities stolen the body they could have produced the remains in any court of law, thus proving that Jesus did not rise again. But they could not. Why not? Because Jesus was cooking breakfast on the beach, alive and well and hungry.

J: So, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, your patience is appreciated, as is your sense of reason. I ask that you consider the evidence presented here today and decide for yourselves either in favour of Mr Scepticism, that the resurrection did not take place and is merely a story, or in favour of the Christian faith, that the resurrection is an actual event. In either case, reason, logic and perhaps faith is required to determine your verdict. The decision is on your hands. What will be your verdict?
Court adjourned. The jury is out.