

Lost Stories: Ananias

Hey Joe, you got any nibbles there?

Well if you don't, pass me a beer.

You know what the wife says, eh Joe?

She says "You're going out ice fishing?"

"More like ice drinking!"

Ya sure I know ya, keeps you warm.

Ya sure me too these days, you bet.

I seen on the Facebook your new granddaughter there.

Ya she looks just like you there, the poor thing.

Ha Ha I'm just joshing ya there Joe.

Ya we been real busy with the Jesus stuff dontcha know.

Ya Sapphira thinks it's got real potential.

Ain't that the same thing we say about the Vikings every year tho?

Yah, no, this is our year. Super Bowl! Yah, cheers!

Do I believe in it? Of course I always have faith in the Vikes.

Oh you mean Jesus.

Well, you know Sapphira.

Last year it was the essential oils,

Before that it was selling ladies clothes,

You know those Lululuraloe clothes. Your wife got some I think.

Well, anyway she's into this Jesus guy now.

Yeah the guy that got crucified a while back.

Yah, no, yah I guess he came back from the dead.

Pretty big deal dontcha know.

I guess nowadays people are coming back from the dead.

Sapphira says he raised his friend back to life too, in Bethany.

And you remember that earthquake a while back?
Yah you bet turns out it happened just when he was dying.
Oh I don't know I'm not some kinda God expert dontcha know.
Well neither is Sapphira but you know how it is with her.
She gets an idea in her head and there she goes.
You know, happy wife, happy life.
Oh no I'm not too worried about the other Jesus followers.
I know the rumors, but these folks are no threat to anybody.
Mostly Galileans, anyway. I don't even think half of them can read.
And just so ya know, I'm not racist.
I don't have a racist bone in my body.
But these Galileans, they really do smell like fish, dontcha know.
I mean I like fishing as much as the next guy,
But at least I get myself cleaned up after.
Yah I mean it's pretty much all they eat there.
Bread and fish, bread and fish.
You'd think they never even heard of a nice kielbasa
Or a hot dish.
Well yah I'm sure they can't afford much else,
But what do you expect,
You bring a bunch of fishermen to the city
And they got nowhere to fish dontcha know.
They got no jobs and no prospects,
Just hoping that God will provide.
Oh yah of course we donate to help them out.
Sapphira thinks we should donate even more money.
I told her we already give every month to this movement.

And where does it go? Bread and fish. Bread and fish.
I keep telling Sapphira that money don't grow on trees dontcha know.
If we're going to give our hard-earned money to these Galileans,
We should have some say in how they spend it.
We should be teaching them some kind of skills,
Not just giving them handouts.
It just seems like these Galileans don't know how to plan for the future.
All they see is the next handout, the next meal.
If they want this movement to keep going,
They're going to need people like us with resources to build something.
Oh no, they don't come to our house anymore.
When Jesus came into Jerusalem before he died,
Sapphira convinced me to let a whole bunch of the believers stay with us.
Let me tell you Joe, it was a nightmare.
Their kids ruined one of Sapphira's rose bushes,
And they wouldn't shut up with their Hosanna this, Hosanna that.
I'm telling you, it took 2 weeks to get that fish smell out of the courtyard.
Yah I used bleach, sure. Plus some Windex and some WD-40.
Never again, Joe. No more hosting for us.
Don't get me wrong, I believe in hospitality.
But if these people can't respect someone else's property, well,
They need to find somewhere else to stay.
We just can't have that type of people around the house there,
Not if they can't respect personal property dontcha know.
So I guess we're back to just donating my hard-earned money,
Buying them bread and fish all day long.
But you'd think a guy would get a bit more recognition, eh Joe?

All those tents they're staying in, guess who bought the fabric?
But do they put up a plaque or call it Camp Ananias?
Nope. That's a big nope there buddy.
Ah but you should see this guy Barnabas.
Yah he's this big shot Levite from Cyprus.
Apparently he sold a big farm over there in Cyprus
He came to the tents and found Peter
And Joe if he didn't drop down a sack of gold and silver
Big enough to sink a fishing boat dontcha know.
I'm telling you Joe you never seen so much coin in one place.
And you know Peter and them go on and on about
Saying you can't buy your place in the church with money.
They talk and talk about how everything is in common,
And everyone's contributions are equal.
They celebrate these poor peasants giving all they have,
Getting all teary-eyed about them giving a couple of bucks.
But someone who actually owns their own business gives and gives
And they give him no respect.
You can't buy power within the church, Joe. That's what they say.
But then Barnabas comes along with his bag of gold and silver,
And all of a sudden he's a celebrity.
He's meeting with Peter and James and all the apostles
In the tent I paid for, dontcha know.
Well what are we supposed to do, huh Joe?
Hang out with those fish-stinking Galileans
while Barnabas gets all the glory?
Nah Joe, we can't quit the group there buddy.

You should see Sapphira's face
when she comes home from those meetings.
There's no changing her mind anymore.
She thinks this Jesus guy was the Messiah,
And she's going to listen to me instead of him?
But ya know if this Barnabas guy can put on a big show,
Well he's not the only one dontcha know.
Me and Sapphira are going to sell our house in Jerusalem.
Yah I know, but we still have the lake house.
Plus with real estate going up we should get a good price.
Should be enough to make Peter and the others
Forget about this Barnabas guy.
But you know if I'm going to support this movement
They're going to have to show a little appreciation.
Sapphira really thinks this movement could take off,
And they're going to need someone with some business sense
in Peter's tent giving advice to the apostles.
They need someone who knows how to run things,
How to manage money and make tough decisions.
Well anyway, should get a good price for that house in Jerusalem.
Am I going to donate the whole kit and kaboodle?
No way, Joe! What do you think I'm crazy?
You think I'm some kind of dummy from Wisconsin?
No that's not thinking like a business owner.
We're going to give enough to make a good show,
But we'll invest some of it so we have something to donate later.
Ya know, that's the thing about these Galileans, Joe.

They never think about the future.

They got no investments, no properties,
No plan for any kinda revenue streams down the road.
If that Barnabas had invested in a basic stock portfolio,
He could be giving them a stream of income every year
For decades to come.

But instead he put it all in one big bag of coins
And dropped it at the apostles' feet like an ignorant Galilean.

No, we're going to be smart about this.
We'll donate enough to get in Peter's good graces,
Then in a year or two when the money dries up,
We come in to save the day with the money we've invested.
In the end, we'll end up donating even more to the cause
Than we would have by giving the full amount.
The interest we earn on our investment will get donated too.

I just hope that one or two of these Galileans
Understand the value of money beyond
Buying the next day's bread and fish.
Joe? Joe! I think you got a bite on your line there.

Ooh boy that looks like a big one.

Wow there Joe,
I never seen a fish so big.
If I'm lying, may God strike me dead!