

**Angelo Goussis**

**Testimony  
April 2011**

**Saved and Got it Made!**

**“There had to be more to life than this life”**



**A Testimony of God’s Amazing Grace**

My name is Angelo Goussis. I was born against the things of God on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 1971. I wish I were never born, but all glory, praise and honor to Almighty God who is mighty good and mighty to save from the gutter-most to the uttermost; who allowed me to be born again by His Holy Spirit in 1998.

**This is My Story, to God be the Glory**

I was born and raised in Australia, of Greek Orthodox decent to wonderful, loving and hard working parents who migrated to Australia from Greece in the 1960’s. I am one of five children, having four beautiful sisters. I was the second youngest.

We were born into the Greek Orthodox religion but were not practicing. From as young as I can remember we were very religious attending church Christmas, Easter, weddings, christenings and funerals.

I was a selfish, spoilt brat when I didn’t get my way. To my very shame I would abuse verbally and physically all in my way including my parents and my dear sisters. I thought that the world revolved around me and that the world owed me something. I had a profane foul mouth. I was nice to those that were nice to me, but because of my stinking pride, I was not nice to those who were not nice to me.

I was a proud, angry and short fused man, always in fights and trouble. As I came into my teenage years I got involved with the wrong crowd and started living a life of sin. To say the least, being foolishly deceived I tried everything this deceptive world had to offer, experiencing the ways of this world, being deceived. This sinful lifestyle and all its vices left me very frustrated and angry; the older I got and the more I delved into sin, the emptier I became until I reached a point where I saw no reason to live.

I had no peace or joy within. I was floating, lifeless, and my sin had only brought me pleasure for a moment. I slowly discovered that TV and its programs were a lie. Hollywood had offered me nothing but deception by glamorizing sin, which only left me more dissatisfied and miserable.

The only thing I hadn't tried was marriage, family and children. Every one around me was getting married, including my sisters and my friends. I thought that this was the answer to an empty and dissatisfied life. So I got married and it was over before it started. I was slowly going insane.

The divorce turned ugly and ended up in the courts for several years, my ex-wife's family wanted to destroy me for bringing shame upon their family. I felt so betrayed - living a lie, falsely accused. I was now fed up with life and contemplated suicide.

I thought I was better off dead and that my problems would be over. I had hit rock bottom! What a mess, having no purpose or reason to live I felt like my life was spinning out of control and spiraling downwards. I often thought of taking my own life but I was scared, not knowing where I would go.

### **My Damascus Road Experience**

One day while I was working in the city a total stranger gave me a little booklet and walked away, it was about Jesus. I looked at it and said, "I am a Christian. I love Jesus. What was he trying to say?" I just read it briefly and threw it in the bin.

Like my life wasn't enough of a mess, news came that my brother-in-law Michael found religion with my eldest sister Georgia and started going to a cult like church. My father told me as the son of the family that I was to take care of the problem and that they had been brainwashed by Michael's friend Chris. Although my father and I never saw eye-to-eye on most things, much like him I was outraged. In this matter we stood united and decided that we had to fix this problem. I was very angry with Chris and threatened to kill his entire family and burn his house to the ground with his family in it. I also threatened to bash Michael. My sister Georgia and her husband Michael went to our parent's home and told them that they had to be born again. To take down the icons, remove crosses and told them that they had to be saved. I flipped out and caused havoc and threatened that if they continued with this cult like church "garbage", someone was going to get seriously hurt. I remember one day bumping into Michael at work, as we worked for the same transport company. I tried hard to make him swear but he refused, I tried to provoke him to no avail. He looked like he was in a trance, brain washed or under some kind of spell and I truly thought that Chris was the ringleader of this cult.

My sister had backed down and came to her senses; she saw what it was doing to our family, which was in an uproar. But Michael continued to attend this cult like church until Georgia told him to stop attending or she would take the kids and leave. At that stage Michael stopped attending church in order to save his marriage.

At this stage Chris then started to give me Gospel paraphernalia about this Jesus Christ. I warned him and threatened him to stop but he gave me a chick gospel track called "This was your life". I thought I would read it in order to find error to help Michael and discredit Chris in the process. But Chris was a fearless, bold witness, relentless and so different to anyone I had ever known. Michael told Chris not to waste time with me and that I would never get saved. He said that the devil would get saved before I did.

## **Gutter-most to the Uttermost**

I remember one day reading this booklet and just started to cry. Something started to tug at my heart. For the very first time I read about the Biblical Jesus, the Holy God of the Holy Bible, what He did for me on that cruel old rugged cross - shedding His precious blood to wash away my sins- and that I was a hell bound, hell-deserving sinner. A great sinner in need of a great Savior, and I needed to be born again. Saved from sin, death and eternal hellfire, it sounded too good to be true but in my stubborn proud heart I said "Not for me! I will never become like Michael or Chris. They have no fun, no life and I am not that bad of a person." Plus, what would my parents, family and my friends say? My life was still a mess.

## **Can't Kick Against the Pricks**

What I read never left me. It would ring and echo in my heart and mind. God's love, Jesus Christ dying for me, forgiveness, eternal life, sin, death, hell, heaven and repentance just kept ringing in my heart and mind. I couldn't stop thinking about the Gospel message but my pride just kept saying "No! I don't need this Jewish Jesus Christ." But at work, Chris kept giving me more of these Gospel tracts with different stories even though I told him not to. I would say "Chris, you're wasting your time." I would take them and though I was mocking Chris and ridiculing, I secretly could not wait to read them. As I read them tears would come rolling down my face and my heart would ache as I read of the love that Jesus had for my eternal soul.

## **Cross Roads of Life – Cross Work of Jesus Christ**

I then bought a Harley Davidson, got involved with an old friend and started to ride with some Rebel bikers who I looked up to and felt like "The Man". Having all the brothers, protection and girls, I felt so cool to be hanging out with bikers. I felt so tough and proud and I felt I belonged to a true brotherhood. I started to ride with the bikers and thought this is it! But those gospel tracts kept coming and Chris kept loving me and challenging me about my soul's salvation.

The truth is I didn't want to be like Chris, I thought he had no life, lived miserably and was weak and brainwashed but he had peace and joy and a genuine love and concern for me. Chris had something I needed but in my pride I was blinded and bound by my sin. I would rebel against and reject the Jesus he preached. He lived what he preached and his life was the only Bible I knew.

I then met the love of my life Tina at a nightclub and fell head over heels in love with her and in several months we were married. We had so much in common and we were both divorcees. She had a beautiful little girl and I loved the whole package deal – an instant family. I loved my wife and her daughter but deep down in the very core of my inner being, in the depths of my longing soul I still had no peace or joy. There was still a deep void and still life had no purpose. Then my first wife discovered that I had been remarried and the court allegations proceeded again, demanding compensation for damages. I lost it! It put so much unnecessary stress on our marriage. I had to defend myself and I felt like everyone was out to get me, they wanted to ruin me and see me in the gutter. My wife was so supportive and stuck by my side through thick and thin. She kept me going on the outside but on the inside I was hurting and angry.

## Our Disappointments are God's Divine Appointment

On one occasion Chris and his family bumped into us in the accounting office in Balmain and Chris invited my wife to come to church and to my amusement she accepted. She really liked Chris and his family. I told my wife very stubbornly that I did not want to go and warned her that they were part of a religious cult, that they were weird and had no life and were going around ruining families by brainwashing them.

My wife looked me straight in the face and said that if I loved her, I would go just once for her. And I said, man why did she have to do that? She knew how much I loved her and that I was infatuated with her and that she was my goddess and I worshiped her and there was nothing that I wouldn't do for her.

Feeling like I had no choice I said I would go once for her and that's it. We went to Condell Park Bible Church. I walked in all puffed up with pride like I was going to a nightclub. I stared everyone down. They all looked like Chris and his family. Everyone looked so happy, friendly and loving. I wasn't used to a place full of Jesus fanatics. I was feeling sick, scared and uncomfortable and I just kept reminding myself, "Only for you, Sweetheart, just once." I wanted to run out and leave.

There were no icons, no candles, and no priest, just people who looked so happy. I felt like saying, "Get lost, what do you want from me?" I had never been so scared - I was terrified. They even welcomed us from the pulpit and then they started to sing about Blood of the Lamb and about Jesus, I was all freaked out and I felt like I had been there forever already. I thought they were going to kill a lamb. I was so uncomfortable and wanted to run out, but then it got worse! The moneybag started to come around. I said, "I knew it they want my money!"

Then came out a man that started to preach about Jesus Christ. It felt like he knew me personally, that he knew my whole life story, like Chris had told him everything about me. My heart sunk within me, it felt like he was just speaking to me. I started to sweat and sink in my seat and I was a mess on the inside. I started to cry for the first time in twenty-seven years. I'd never heard about a loving God who loved me enough to die for me on a Calvary's Cross to save me from my sin and the wrath to come. This loving God wanted to save me more than I wanted to be saved. He wasn't out to get me but to forgive me for my sins, to restore broken fellowship with Him and to heal my broken heart. My heart melted at this truth that this God would become a man in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God to die for me.

The preacher illustrated the following story:

*Here is a story of a young man who lovingly built a little sailboat. Having finished it, he took it to a stream behind his house and put it in the water. The little boat sailed perfectly! But the wind blew hard and his boat was taken away and he could not find it. After he searched for a long time, he sadly returned home.*

*One day he was walking downtown and saw his boat in a store window. Having found out from the storeowner how much the boat would cost he returned home and got all the money he had. After paying for the boat, he was walking home and said to his boat, "You are twice mine. I made you and I bought you".*

Like that little boat, we are twice the Lord's. He made us and Christ bought us back by paying the price for our sin with His own blood.

Something was tugging at my heart and my stinking pride was smashed. I couldn't wait to get out of there. Then there was more singing, then an invitation to receive this Jesus. I froze as I was under heavy Holy Spirit conviction. If I had of known then what I know now I would have run down the aisle doing cartwheels to receive Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior.

Now for the first time I knew I had sinned against a Holy God and deserved hell for my sin and I had a God shaped vacuum in my heart and only God himself could fill it and save me from the wrath to come.

I had been lied to and deceived for twenty-seven years. I had been my own worst enemy. I lived a lie blinded by sin. I knew about Jesus Christ but never knew Him personally. I had a man-made religion, but not Biblical salvation nor did I ever have a real living relationship with my Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ my Lord.

### **Incomplete Without Him – Complete in Him**

I had been looking in all the wrong places. I thought I would lose everything but soon found out that everything I was looking for was in Christ the Lord. I left the church a mess; this God they told me about was dealing with me and I knew I had to do business with a Holy God at the foot of His Cross on His terms and conditions and it was non-negotiable.

I can't remember the exact date or time but I vividly remember a definite point in my life, late in 1998. I went home and I knew beyond a shadow of any doubt that it was now or never. I got on my knees by the side of my bed before I went to sleep, the Gospel was ringing in my heart and mind and I bowed my head and my heart to God Almighty and for the first time swallowed my pride. I told God in the best way that I knew how that I was so sorry for living my life my way for so long and sinning against Him. I cried out from a sincere heart from the depths of my soul and from the core of my inner being and asked the Lord to save me from sin. I was crying and felt like a little boy that had just found his loving father. That moment the burning weight of sin and its shame and its guilt was lifted off my shoulders. Peace and joy flooded my soul as God had me born again. I laid in bed and for the first time I appreciated the moon and the stars as they shined in the darkness.

### **Born Again, Modern Day Miracle.**

The light of the glorious gospel had dawned on my soul; the only thing I don't regret in life is getting saved. I cried myself to sleep tears of joy; it was the best sleep I ever had. The next morning I awoke a brand new person. For the life of me I could not swear and I had perfect peace and unspeakable joy. This was the best decision I have ever made to let Jesus save me from my sin, no more anger or frustration, now I had a purpose for living and a hunger to learn Gods Holy Bible and tell others about the saving and changing power of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was a burden in my heart to tell others about the one I had rebelled against, rejected and persecuted. Thank God that Chris never gave up on me; I now had a love for all people. This love was God's love flowing through me to reach a lost and dying world.

My wife said that she prayed and accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior, I prayed with my stepdaughter and she received Christ also.

## **Counting the Cost**

Getting saved cost me nothing but it cost God His precious Son. I soon started to learn that to live and speak for Jesus would cost me but not more than it cost Jesus Christ at Calvary. There was a fire in my heart to tell others about Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior, if I was now a child of the living God and on my way to heaven, my loved ones and friends were not, so I asked my God to help me tell others about my new found faith in Jesus Christ. Hell became so real to me and my desire was to warn people about this terrible place of eternal torment.

As soon as I told my parents my father and mother spat in my face and threatened to disown and disinherit me. My father said that I was no longer his son and made a financial offer to pay off my existing mortgage of several hundred thousand dollars, if I would renounce Jesus and return back to the Greek Orthodox church. With tears I told my father "You're the best father in the world! But for the first time in my life I have real peace, real joy in Jesus Christ who has become so real to me." People always ask me if becoming a Bible-believing Christian was worth all the heartache and persecution and I always respond in the same way by telling them that to know the truth is worth it. Jesus is worth it to follow the One who made me free. To my Father's amazement I declined his offer; as my father knew how much I loved money. They mocked, cursed and spat on me. My poor wife was shocked and so hurt; we lost most of our friends and most of my family would not visit or invite us to family gatherings. Among all the persecution I had a perfect peace and joy from my Lord and to my amazement I did not retaliate with violence as I normally would have.

Brother Chris helped and loved us and showed us from God's Word the Holy Bible that this would happen, the Bible was coming alive and proving day by day to be the precious Word of God. My heart was broken and breaking for the souls of mankind whom Christ Jesus died for and I could not but speak the things of the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation. Now Almighty God was using this loudmouth, once used for profanity, now being used to preach the gospel to every creature. I became His mouthpiece to a lost and dying world.

Family and friends branded us as Jesus freaks and fanatics. I wasn't angry or hateful but my heart was bleeding for their souls to be saved, to be born again.

All my life before I got saved I lived in misery and wickedness of sin and was commended for it. Now God had borne me again and my own family hated me and wanted nothing to do with me. I would cry myself to sleep for days on end for their precious souls. I thank my God for saving me and changing me from the inside out. All I wanted to do was to learn about my Saviour and tell people about the real Biblical Jesus and God's simple plan of salvation.

## **She Chose to Leave, I Chose to Love**

My wife now started to ask me to tone it down and leave people alone. She wasn't enjoying the change in me and wanted me back how I was. She would say, "You're not the man I married; you have become a total stranger. You have taken the Jesus thing to far," and many times she threatened to leave saying that she was not in love with me anymore. She loved the old me not the new me. She started to hate what I was becoming and told me that I could save the world for Jesus without her.

I was gutted, nothing ever hurt like that before. My heart was so broken and I was shattered. If I could have toned it down or rid myself of salvation I would have to save my marriage but I could not but speak about my Jesus and preach the Gospel. I could not give her the lifestyle she wanted; we stayed together for several years but lived separate lives. It was absolute misery and she finally decided to leave. After she left she said that even God could not bring her back.

As a human being I had never felt so much pain physically, emotionally and spiritually. I was in a spiritual coma for about two years, backslidden, out of church, out of fellowship with God's people and angry with God. I turned my back on God and ran as far away as I could from God. I gave away all my tracts, bibles, notes, sermons, and tapes and I wanted nothing to do with God anymore. I tried to fit back into the world but I was slowly going insane; the Holy Spirit of God was bothering me and seeing to it that I would be miserable in my rebellious condition. My parents, friends and even some so called professing Christians blamed the church and Jesus for the breakup and said how he will come back to the Greek Orthodox church. My wife wanted me to stop judging her and others and to stop telling her how to live her life. She wanted to do what she wanted to do. She said she would come to church when she was older and had nothing else to do. After she finally left I was hurt beyond degree. The love of my life had walked out because I was too much for Jesus Christ; I was so angry at God for letting her go but it was now time that God would start to separate me unto Himself.

### **Before God can Make a Man, He has to Break a Man**

My God allowed this to happen so He could work in my heart and life. The truth is that if my wife was never genuinely saved, I was not going to hold her hand to hell. God's amazing grace still amazes me how He has taught me through brokenness how to love my estranged wife, regardless of her actions, to pray for her salvation or restoration to God. I was backslidden for nearly two years. I was so miserable, I lost the joy of God's Salvation, and, not having peace, was slowly going insane. God's Holy Spirit was convicting me and bothering me to no end. The only one who could help me I resisted. I would pray earnestly that God would kill me and take me home. I remember watching The Passion of Christ at the cinemas and crying so much. When I walked out I bumped into some Bible believers giving out Gospel tracts. I spoke to a dear brother and he encouraged me to get back into fellowship with God and His people but I thought that if I go back to church that my wife would never come back. I truly just got tired of running from God and knew that I had to repent and trust my God. I tried to go back to Condell Park Bible church but it was too painful. I was invited to go to an Open Door Baptist church in Menai and after a couple of services God got a hold of my heart. I knew then that I had to repent and get right with my God and Saviour. I fell on my knees and face and started to cry unto my God and rededicated my whole life to the Lord and I can truly say I have never looked back. Now looking back the worst thing I did was to run from God and not run to God, as He was the only One who could have helped me.

### **God is Good all the Time**

Brother Chris gave me a CD of preaching sermons to encourage me. My love for my God was rekindled and my heart was revived, praise be to God. He put His everlasting arms around me and I started to fall so in love with my God and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ who gave me a song in the night. My wife took me to church and I got saved, then when my wife left me I was set apart unto God. I've truly experienced God's love through these fiery trials. He is so worthy. Brokenness brings an unbroken fellowship with God. I've learnt to walk and talk with my

God and have realized that I am here for His glory and honor, His pleasure not my pleasure, and the eternal wellbeing of others. It's not about me but about others coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I have learnt to take care of God's business and He will take care of my business. I just want what God wants; not my will but thine be done, nothing between my soul and Saviour. My union with Christ has brought about an eternal marriage with my God whose Grace is all sufficient and His indwellment in me results in the fullest possible satisfaction, regardless of the circumstances of life.

**Praise be to God – Love in Christ Alone**

“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (1Cor 15:10)