

My Biggest Regret

After more than 50 years of bold, in-your-face, Jewish evangelism, I am often asked, "Sid, what is your greatest regret?"

I have many regrets, but my biggest one is that I did not pray in tongues (supernatural languages) enough. I knew praying in tongues was important, but Paul emphasizes how crucial it is in 1 Corinthians 14:18 saying, "I thank my God that I speak in tongues more than you all," (The Supernatural Bible).

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You might be thinking, I'm too busy to pray in tongues. Well, Paul was one BUSY believer. And he faced constant dangers and persecution. Let's read some of his activities and hardships from 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 (NLT):

"Are they servants of Messiah? ... I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea.... I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm."

While he endured all these attacks, Paul had to teach, lead and organize the Jewish and Gentile believers—not to mention writing a large portion of the New Testament! Yes, he was one

busy man!

But the thing I am in awe over is that with all his responsibility, Paul still carved out time to pray for the salvation of Israel more than any other believer! God imprinted on his heart in Romans 10:1: ...my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

Paul's secret to praying without ceasing

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul said he prayed ...without ceasing. How can any human pray without ceasing? That means, while you work, while you sleep, while you eat, etc.

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Here is Paul's secret. He prayed in tongues silently, without moving his lips. Praying in tongues does not originate in the brain. Jesus said it originates from the innermost belly. In John 7:38 (ISV), Jesus says, "...he who is believing in Me, according as the Writing said, Rivers of living water will flow out of his belly." That is why you can train (discipline) yourself to pray in tongues in all circumstances—even while you're having a conversation with someone.

If you pray in tongues enough, you will begin to pray automatically all the time. I find it's easier to fall asleep by praying silently and not even moving my tongue or lips. And this allows me to pray all night in tongues even while I sleep!

"Sid, how did you learn that language?"

My favorite personal story about praying in tongues involves a traditional Jew who became a Messianic rabbi. One day we were both speaking at the same conference. I introduced myself to him and we were deeply involved in conversation. Suddenly, a

woman walked up to us and said, "I am pregnant, and my doctor said the baby is dead and must be removed! Can you pray the baby comes back to life?"

This sure caught my undivided attention as well as the rabbi's. I watched intently to see what he would do, since I was a brand-new believer.

Then he did the last thing I expected or even wanted. The rabbi asked me to pray for her. I didn't have the faith to pray for a dead baby to be resurrected. The only prayer I had faith to pray was in tongues. So, I prayed in tongues for all I was worth!

When I finished, the rabbi looked at me strangely and asked, "Sid, how did you learn that language?" He then proceeded to tell me I was speaking in a very ancient dialect of Hebrew that he could understand. The rabbi explained I had said to the woman in this dialect that her child was with God in heaven and not to pray for the baby anymore.

Speaking the wonderful works of God

This month is Pentecost (Shavuot). What happened to me in the story above reminds me of what the disciples experienced after being baptized in the Holy Spirit at the first Pentecost in Jerusalem. In Acts 2:8 (kjv), as the disciples spoke in other tongues, the crowd that had gathered exclaimed, "...how hear we every man in our own tongue [dialect], wherein we were born?"

And what was it that they heard the disciples saying? In Acts 2:11, those in the crowd said, "...we hear them speaking in our languages the mighty works of God." How would you like to speak without ceasing the wonderful works of God?

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Here's one more revelation to help you expand your praying in tongues. The Amplified Classic puts a different spin on 1 Corinthians 14:18: "I thank God that I speak in...tongues (languages) more than...all of you put together."

Did you know Paul said that if we speak in tongues enough, we will be thrust into the gear of being able to prophesy? A Greek scholar friend of mine told me about an old Greek translation of 1 Corinthians 14:5, which reads, "Now I want you all speaking in tongues, but especially even more in order that you may be prophesying."

At this strategic moment in history, it's more important than ever for you to be praying in tongues. If you have never done it, just ask the Father for the baptism of His Holy Spirit! And if you used to pray in tongues but got sidetracked, I pray you get your first love back for tongues and for the Lord!

Sid Roth, a former Merrill Lynch executive, experienced a dramatic encounter with Jesus that transformed his life. Now host of *It's Supernatural!*, he shares powerful testimonies of miracles and the supernatural, bridging his Jewish heritage with a vibrant Christian faith.