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## Viewpoints

*Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.*

### How Fast Do You Read? ~ September 25, 2014 *The benefits of taking the time to slowly read your Bible* [Online Version & Archive](#)

How fast do you read? That question intrigued me. In fact, it lured me into taking the online test (link shared below).

My lackadaisical approach quickly turned into competitive alertness. Why? Because an accompanying graph informs us that the average fifth grader reads 173 words a minute while the average rate for adults is 250 words a minute. But a true speed reader averages a whopping 650 words a minute! I sat up straight and leaned toward the computer screen: "Hmmm... I wonder where my rate will fall?"

Wait. What's this? After calculating reading speed, a quiz follows that tests comprehension? Yikes! I cleaned my glasses and rolled up my sleeves. And with an athletic pause to collect my focus, I exhaled and then clicked "start."

I learned some things about myself in the next few minutes of working through the test. I learned that after all these years, I still harbor fear that I'm not as "good" as I should be.

But the main thing I learned is that I don't need to feel guilty that I read my Bible s-l-o-w-l-y. In fact, this free online speed reading test is offered in connection with research that highlights what I've known for years: when I slowly read my Bible, I have more peace and strength in my life. And now there's research that bears this out? That's crazy.

No, actually, that's grace. Grace is God's unearned love, which he bleeds to us at the cross, and from the cross through the pages of the Bible.

But first, here's why regularly taking time to read slowly is good. "Slow readers list numerous benefits to a regular reading habit, saying it improves their ability to concentrate, reduces stress levels and deepens their ability to think, listen and empathize... Reading literary fiction helps people understand others' mental states and beliefs, a crucial skill in building relationships. A study of 300 elderly people showed... [that] reading slowed rates of memory loss in participants' later years."

Reading the Bible slowly would qualify for all these benefits, because the history parts of the Bible are like the story lines found in literary fiction, except the Bible's story lines are historically true and without error. So you can read about the dysfunctional family that sold

Joseph into slavery and see how the Lord was all along invisibly working behind the scenes to craft an amazing turn-around. Slowly pour yourself into the account, and scripture will *reduce your stress, deepen your ability to think, listen and empathize (all of which helps you build relationships) even as it protects your brain from memory loss.*

But because you're reading a literary work produced by God the Holy Spirit, not only will he magnify these benefits, he'll give you the ultimate benefit of growing in your certainty that at the center of all world history is Jesus Christ—the promised God-man whose death and resurrection guarantees that his forgiving grace assures us of his loving help today, tomorrow and forever. **“He is before all things, and in him all things hold together... he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy”** (Colossians 1:17-18).

From scripture bleeds the grace of God that promises: **“Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you, so we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’”** (Hebrews 13:6). See! I should have read this verse before I took the speed reading test, and then I wouldn't have worried about how I would match up with fifth graders!

*P.S. If it took you only a minute to read this Viewpoint, you're speed reading. **Slow down, my friend!** And better yet, take some time to slowly read about God's protective care of Joseph in Genesis, chapters 37-47.*

**Speed Reading Test by Wall Street Journal:** <http://projects.wsj.com/speedread/>

Source Material (Links may become inactive over time.)

[Read Slowly to Benefit Your Brain and Cut Stress](#) @ The Wall Street Journal

[Genesis eBook Edition – The People's Bible Commentary](#) @ Northwestern Publishing House, \$19.99 🌟 I highly recommend! 🌟

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*Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz*

