

The teachFASTly.com resources are not intended as a complete curriculum. The activities are designed to be woven into your existing teaching. This Quick Stop Lesson Plan is therefore not a single lesson plan, but rather a quick way of exploring the themes of an activity map. It includes one Discover activity, one Delve activity, and one Debrief activity. Together, these may take more than a class period, and you may want to add other activities between them. For more information visit www.teachfastly.com.

ETHICS AND THE HUMAN BODY

As we help students learn about and explore the science of the human body, we hope that they will see God's remarkable handiwork and develop an understanding of their responsibility in return. The activities in this activity map could be used in a high school science class on anatomy and physiology, or in a Bible class considering the Bible's perspective on our bodies. Ideally it could be used in collaboration across the two, with the goal of helping students understand how faith relates to scientific questions about the body. The activities invite reflection on this relationship and focus on placing the human body in a larger ethical and spiritual context. They invite students to engage with a variety of ethical issues related to the body and to consider how they relate to faith. They also point beyond reflection to response. The ways in which we engage the study of anatomy and physiology should help shape students' practice in light of faithful ethical considerations.

It is recommended that work on this topic be coordinated between science and Bible teachers, and that good communication with parents be practiced.

This Quick Stop Lesson Plan on **Ethics and the Human Body** contains the following activities and attachments from www.teachfastly.com, which are combined for your ease of use in a downloadable ZIP file:

DISCOVER Activity: The Bible and Bodies

Activity Attachment

- *The Bible and Bodies PowerPoint*
- *The Bible and Bodies Handout*

DELVE Activity: Evaluating Ethical Issues

Activity Attachment

- *Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Handout*
- *Evaluating Ethical Issues Handout*
- *Evaluating Ethical Issues PowerPoint*

DEBRIEF Activity: Ethical Issues Investigation

Activity Attachment

- *Tackling Topics in Ethics Handout*

DISCOVER

Activity: The Bible and Bodies

Time: 20 Minutes

In Brief

The goal of this activity is to have students read and respond to a variety of Bible passages that talk about our physical bodies, understanding that they challenge a stark soul versus body divide. The activity aims to help students see that faith is not just about inner or “spiritual” realities, but has implications for our physical lives.

Goals

Students will understand that the Bible’s view of the body is more holistic than a dichotomy between the spiritual and the material.

Students will engage in the practice of interpreting Scripture with others.

Thinking Ahead

This activity challenges the assumption that faith is about things that are inward, invisible, or “spiritual,” relegating our physical selves to the realm of scientific study only. In 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 the Apostle Paul challenges the idea of splitting a person into an important soul and a less important body. Instead, the Bible views us as whole beings, created by God with the purpose of honoring him with our whole being. It is easy to read cultural divisions between the “spiritual” and the “material” back into the Bible, and students may come with assumptions about the degree to which faith is relevant to learning about the body. This activity invites students to see the body differently. It provides time to investigate and discuss how the Bible speaks about bodies and engages students in interpreting the Bible together with others. Teaching FASTly does not mean turning away from the material to the spiritual, but seeing how our bodily lives are rooted in faith.

Preparing the Activity

You will need the **Bible and Bodies PowerPoint** and the **Bible and Bodies Handout** for students to cut apart so that each group of four receives one Bible passage to reflect on.

Teaching the Activity

If possible, arrange your classroom seating into groups of four before students arrive. Divide students into groups of four for a think-pair-share activity and distribute **The Bible and Bodies Handout** so that each group has a different passage. Allow students to read the verse and the additional prompt, and make notes individually in

silence for two minutes.

Next ask each student to compare notes with a partner within the group. Have partners share their responses with each other for two minutes. Each student should add notes from this conversation in the space for “partner group reactions.”

Then have the partner groups share with each other in the group of four. Each student should add notes from this conversation in the space for “group reactions.” These three note-taking steps will allow students to see clearly what they have gained from listening to others within the group and engage them directly in the important practice of reading and interpreting together with others, rather than just individually.

Finally, have each group of four present their reactions to the class. Project each passage and prompt, included in the **Bible and Bodies PowerPoint** on the screen for the whole class to see. Read the passage and prompt aloud for the class and let each group present the reactions and thoughts their group generated.

The passages discussed are listed below, with brief talking points for each:

Genesis 1:27-28 (NET):

²⁷God created humankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them,
male and female he created them.
God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply!
Fill the earth and subdue it!”

Many current theological accounts relate the image of God to the theme of ruling in the next verse. The word for “image” involved physical representation. Imaging God includes responsible action as God’s representative on earth.

1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 19-20 (NET):

¹³ The body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ Now God indeed raised the Lord and he will raise us by his power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? ... ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

The context here shows Paul resisting the prevalent view of his day that thought that since the spirit is more important than the body, it does not matter if we sin with our bodies. Paul focuses on the importance of the body. God will raise the body and collectively our bodily lives make up the church, which is his temple.

Psalm 139:13-14 (NET):

¹³ Certainly you made my mind and heart;
you wove me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I will give you thanks because your deeds are awesome and amazing.
You knew me thoroughly...

This passage presents God as intimately involved in the putting together of our bodies. Rather than causing us to turn away from our bodies to worship, we express thanks for our bodies.

Matthew 18:7-9 (NET):

⁷ Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! It is necessary that stumbling blocks come, but woe to the person through whom they come. ⁸ If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into fiery hell.

Jesus is using hyperbole here. Have students note how important it is to compare passages. Psalm 139 that we just read valued the body highly. This passage can also be seen to value the body in the sense that it matters greatly what we do with our bodies, for they are meant to be used for holiness.

Romans 12:1-2 (NET):

¹ Therefore I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—alive, holy, and pleasing to God—which is your reasonable service. ² Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God—what is good and well-pleasing and perfect.

Service and sacrifice involve what we do with our bodily life, not just in the spirit.

1 Corinthians 10:24-31 (NET):

²⁴ Do not seek your own good, but the good of the other person. ²⁵ Eat anything that is sold in the marketplace without questions of conscience, ²⁶ for the earth and its abundance are the Lord's. ²⁷ If an unbeliever invites you to dinner and you want to go, eat whatever is served without asking questions of conscience. ²⁸ But if someone says to you, "This is from a sacrifice," do not eat, because of the one who told you and because of conscience—²⁹ I do not mean yours but the other person's. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? ³⁰ If I partake with thankfulness, why am I blamed for the food that I give thanks for? ³¹ So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

This passage continues the theme that bodily activities as basic as eating are related to love of God and neighbor. It is in our bodily actions that we show whatever kind of love the situation requires: eating when that honors the other, and not eating when eating would injure the other's conscience.

1 Corinthians 15:52-55 (NET):

⁵² For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ Now when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen, "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"

Paul here expresses the hope for a bodily resurrection, not a soul saved out from within a body container and the body discarded, but a renewal of the body as the mortal "puts on" immortality like new clothes.

In conclusion, reflect briefly with students on how the physical layout of the classroom enabled interaction, studying Scripture together, and listening to one another. This connects with the theme that what we do with our bodies matters for love of God and neighbor. If you have time, extend this activity by having groups choose one of the passages and read its larger context in the chapter(s) from which it is taken, to see if this adds to their interpretation. If you do not have time to do this, mention that this would be an important next step to be sure we understand each passage well.

DELVE

Activity: Evaluating Ethical Issues

Time: 60 Minutes

In Brief

The Discover activities started students thinking about the role of science, faith, and ethics in relation to the human body. This activity engages students in working with a simple model to help them think about how faith and science can inform ethical issues affecting the body. It focuses on cardiovascular disease.

Goals

Students will understand that arriving at an informed position on ethical issues concerning the body involves drawing from multiple sources and perspectives, both scientific and non-scientific.

Students will understand that love of neighbor is related to our deliberation about what to do in light of scientific understanding of the human body.

Students will practice using a simple framework as a model for approaching complex ethical issues relating to the body.

Students will learn about ethical issues connected to the cardiovascular system.

Thinking Ahead

This lesson could serve as the first ethical issue that students are presented with over the course of the semester. It could be used in conjunction with study of the cardiovascular system. It introduces a simple model for approaching ethical issues relating to the human body. Because it is a simple model, it cannot capture the full complexity of such issues. It focuses attention on points of reference to be considered. It does not include every aspect of decision making, and students will still need to learn about how to construct and critique arguments of various kinds that can be mounted from these sources. The model's simplicity, however, makes it a practical and accessible starting point for thinking about where faith and science fit into deliberation, and offers a tool that is easy to remember. Even though it is simple, its structure encourages students to move beyond thinking that ethical issues can be adequately approached only in terms of how they affect me, or only in terms of appeal to authority, using scientific knowledge. The model encourages students to see the necessity of consulting their own needs, those of their neighbor, and relevant sources of knowledge and guidance in science, theology, and ethics before constructing a position. It models a practice of deliberation that does not revolve around the self. Examining our motivations as well as how we find truth is part of Teaching FASTly. Consider adopting this model and reinforcing it through repeated use with other topics, such as infertility treatment, end of life issues, genetics testing, or cosmetic surgery.

Preparing the Activity

You will need the **Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Handout** and the **Evaluating Ethical Issues PowerPoint**. There is also the **Evaluating Ethical Issues Handout** that you may opt to use.

Teaching the Activity

Tell students that they are going to think about how to take a position on an ethical question involving the human body using a simple framework to help them begin to consider factors beyond their own opinions. Project the “Evaluating Ethical Issues” slide from **Evaluating Ethical Issues PowerPoint**. Explain that the three corners of the triangle represent different considerations that go into our decision-making on ethical issues:

- Me—How will this affect me? This is the first thing that we may naturally think about, and our own voice on a topic may be important, especially if we are one of those most affected.
- Community—How will this decision affect others? We are called by God to not only think of ourselves, but to also think about our neighbors. This corner is about considering how an issue affects others.
- Knowledge—What do relevant sources of knowledge and guidance have to say on this issue? What is the current scientific understanding of the issue? And how does a commitment to Christian faith frame this issue in terms of theological considerations?

It may help students to see the applicability of the model if you talk through a relatively simple example with them, such as should peanut butter be part of school lunches? Discuss briefly how it might affect decision-making if one of the three corners were ignored. For example, trying to be loving while remaining ignorant of how certain things can lead to harm; scientific information without a reason to do good to others does not tell us what to do with that information; reasoning only from our own experience is limiting, but not listening to individuals can rob us of needed input too. In the remainder of this activity students will practice using this framework to think about an ethical issue keeping those components in mind. The example focuses on cardiovascular disease prevention. This is a serious issue, but also one less likely to produce immediate strong reactions, thereby allowing space for reflection.

Distribute the **Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Handout**. Instruct students to read the article and write answers to the questions that follow. To answer some of the questions fully, students will need to carry out further research online, and you may wish to make this part of the activity a homework task.

After students finish reading and responding, arrange them in small groups and have them discuss their answers with their group members. Remind them to listen carefully to others' conclusions. Following the small group sharing, discuss the questions together as a larger group. During the discussion elicit responses from various groups by having them share parts of their group's discussion.

Once discussion is complete, ask each student to write a short essay taking a position on the questions raised and explaining how that position was informed by the three points of the triangle. Use this assignment to assess individual understanding of the framework and of the relevant science. If you wish, you could ask students to make their notes from the reflection questions the basis of an essay.

DEBRIEF

Activity: Ethical Issues Investigation

Time: Extended

In Brief

This activity involves a cumulative or final project that allows students to use what they have been learning to investigate an ethical issue of their own choice related to the science of the human body. It can allow you to assess both science learning and how students now see the relationship of science to ethical questions.

Goals

Students will apply what they have been learning to investigate an ethical issue of their choice.

Students will show that they can integrate scientific learning and ethical reflection.

Thinking Ahead

This activity could be used as a culminating project at the end of a course on anatomy and physiology. You can tweak the size of the project by changing the number of source articles that students are required to use. You could also turn this activity into a cumulative project throughout the semester by asking students at intervals to complete the first page of **Tackling Topics in Ethics Handout** one article at a time, and then have them complete the second page once a number of articles have been examined. The framework used is intended to encourage students to move beyond thinking that ethical issues can be adequately approached only in terms of how they affect me, or only in terms of appeal to authority using scientific knowledge. The model encourages students to see the necessity of consulting their own needs, those of their neighbor, and relevant sources of knowledge and guidance in science, theology, and ethics before constructing a position. It models a practice of deliberation that does not revolve around the self.

Preparing the Activity

You will need the **Tackling Topics in Ethics Handout**.

Teaching the Activity

Tell students they will use the framework from previous activities to investigate a further issue of their own choice. It would be helpful to conduct a brief class discussion to brainstorm possible issues related to the human body, such as infertility treatment, end of life issues, genetics testing, or cosmetic surgery. You may also wish to suggest some good online sources of articles on these topics, and/or provide instruction on

efficient searching. Discuss with students the difference between a more substantive article and a brief opinion piece, and instruct them to search for the former.

Give students copies of **Tackling Topics in Ethics Handout** and ask them to complete it in preparation for working on an essay. The first page asks them to find two articles on the topic and examine their argument using a series of questions. The second page asks them to reflect on their own view as informed by what they learned from their reading. It also asks them to engage in discussion with family members to help them think about other perspectives and to place ethical reflection in the context of their relationships.

Once these steps are completed, you may wish to provide time for further input by having students discuss what they have found with a partner. Finally, ask students to write an essay about the issue they have investigated. Let them know that you will be looking for evidence that they have thought through the model they have been using (me, neighbor, knowledge), and they have made accurate and appropriate use of scientific information as well as ethical/theological considerations. You can use this essay to assess both their handling of scientific sources and their reflective use of the model.