

## What is Teaching FASTly?

Teaching FASTly has nothing to do with hurrying. FAST stands for **Faith And Science Teaching**. It is about how Christian faith can inform teaching about faith and science, both in science class and in Bible class. *And* may be a short word, but it is vital. Too often popular discussions of science and religion portray them as two sides at war, requiring us to embrace one at the expense of the other. This picture is simplistic and misleading. While there are some challenging controversies at the intersection of faith and science, the relationship is much richer than a few high-profile arguments.

**Teaching FASTly means teaching in a way that allows both faith *and* science to remain in play, each with its own integrity, and neither canceling out the other. It means looking out for all the ways faith and science can be in conversation, not just the few opportunities for taking positions on controversial questions.**

The context of learning is filled with competing voices and attachments. Student relationships to parents, pastors, teachers, and peers, as well as media and internet chatter about controversial faith-science issues, all contribute to the landscape of learning. Honoring both faith and science in the classroom helps students engage their whole selves in learning and move beyond fear or simple slogans. The focus is not on providing the right answer to each difficult question, but on how we can build a learning environment in which students can explore faith and science questions responsibly and in a manner that honors others.

**Teaching FASTLY means approaching students as whole people, with beliefs, commitments, character, feelings, and relationships, and not just as recipients of knowledge. It means not letting the faith-science conversation just be a debate, but rather seeing it as an opportunity to foster rich learning through creative pedagogy.**

### What teachFASTly IS:

- **A modeled approach.** You can adapt, re-sequence, cherry-pick and skip activities. While we have aimed to provide everything you need to teach the activities without a lot of extra effort, the underlying goal is to model an approach to teaching about faith and science. We hope this approach will help you to develop further strategies of your own.
- **A push at the boundaries.** We have aimed to challenge traditional separations such as faith separated from science or intellectual learning separated from whole-person growth, and find ways to create rich new connections. If an example does not persuade you, ask yourself how else you could make the same connection. If a crossed boundary offends you, ask yourself why.
- **A collection of free resources.** There is no paywall, no passwords, nothing to join, but just a collection of ideas, lesson plans, handouts, and presentation slides developed by your fellow teachers with the hope that you will find things to enrich your own teaching and the learning experiences of your students.

### What teachFASTly is NOT:

- **A replacement science or Bible curriculum.** The activities at [www.teachfastly.com](http://www.teachfastly.com) do not cover every topic and are not always intended to be taught in sequence. They are designed to enrich your existing teaching resources. We anticipate that you will continue to use your current teaching materials and assessment tools.
- **An attempt to replace science class with Bible class, or vice versa.** Some activities may be different from what you are used to doing in science class or Bible class. The goal is to enrich science teaching and Bible teaching, and to enable richer connections between them that honor both.
- **A set of positions on controversial faith/science questions.** The different teachers who helped develop these activities have personal views on faith and science issues, and those views may show through in places. But the aim is to offer examples of a whole approach to teaching, and not positions you have to agree with.

### **How to use teachFASTly**

Explore! There are more than a hundred teaching activities on teachFASTly.com, with more to be added. The site enables you to browse by subject area, faith theme, or pedagogical strategy. It includes reviews of relevant books and short essays designed to help you think through key issues. Descriptions of teaching activities are accompanied by links to all handouts and slides you will need to teach them. If you are short of time, you can click on the Quick Stop button on any overview page to get a sampler of three related activities. But remember, these topics are not well served by haste. Take time to use the activity descriptions to reflect on your own teaching. TeachFASTly aims not only to provide immediate tools, but also to help your own growth as a teacher. We hope it bears fruit in your classroom.