

LO: To understand the symbolic meaning of baptism

What IS A Symbol

- A **symbol** is often an ordinary object, event, person, color or animal to which we have attached extraordinary meaning and significance beyond the literal level.



LION

Known as the "king of the jungle," the lion is a symbol of strength, royalty and authority. In religion, it is used to represent Christ as king.



CRESCENT

The astrological sign representing the moon, the crescent symbolizes new beginnings and the making of dreams into reality.



LIGHT

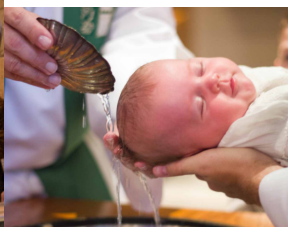
A symbol of purity, goodness, clarity and enlightenment. In religion, light is often associated with immortality and a higher power.



RAINBOW

Often seen after a rain, the rainbow signifies new beginnings, hope, the fulfillment of a dream and the promise of prosperity.

Baptism: A Christian symbol. But what does it mean? Here are lots of images of baptism in lots of different contexts, but they all have something in common...[water](#)! Why is this? Let's remind ourselves of what we have learnt about the Christian faith this week, as it will help answer this question.



A reminder of what many Christians believe the one big story of the Bible is saying.

1)



**God is the loving king of everything
because he made everything.**

God made the whole world and everything in it. So God is in charge of the world. He's the king.

God is not a bossy, selfish king like some human kings. He's kind and loving and good. That's why the world he made is full of good things.

God makes people too, and gives us life. That means he's our king. We should read what God says in the Bible, and do what he says.

The trouble is, we don't like doing what God tells us to do...

2)



**We say 'No' to God.
We try to be our own king instead.
But we make a big
mess of God's good world.**

Even though God is the true king, we don't want him to be our king.

We all say 'No' to him by not obeying him as king. We do what we want to do, instead of what God wants us to do. We pretend that we are the king instead of God. This is what the Bible calls 'sin'.

Sin causes lots of problems.

By trying to do things our own way, we hurt each other and make a big mess of God's good world.

What do you think God will do about this?

3)



God is the only true king.
He won't let people keep on saying 'No' to him.
God's punishment is that we
are shut out of his kingdom forever.

It makes God angry that we don't obey him as king. It also makes him angry that we are selfish, and hurt each other, and make a mess of his world.

God won't let us keep saying 'No' to him and pretending to be our own king instead.

One day, God will show everyone that he is the only true king. He will set up a wonderful kingdom that never ends. And on that day, everyone who has been saying 'No' to him will be shut out of his kingdom forever.

**We all deserve God's punishment.
But there's good news...**

4)



Because of his love, God sent his Son, Jesus, into the world. Jesus died to take our punishment so that we could be forgiven.

Because he is so loving, God has done something to rescue us from the punishment we deserve.

Many years ago, God sent his own Son, Jesus, into the world. Jesus didn't say 'No' to God. He always did what God wanted him to. And so he didn't deserve to be punished like the rest of us.

But Jesus *was* punished. He was killed on a cross. God loved us so much that he punished his own Son Jesus *instead of us*.

This means that we can be forgiven for saying 'No' to God. We can be welcomed into God's wonderful kingdom as his friends.


But there's even more good news.

5)



God brought Jesus back to life again,
and made him the king of everything.
One day, Jesus will come back.

When people die, we don't see them any more. They stay dead.
But even though Jesus died, God brought him back to life again,
and lots of people saw him and even touched him.
Then Jesus left our world and went back to be with God, his Father.
And God made Jesus the king of the whole world.
One day, King Jesus will come back to our world. He will punish
everyone who is still saying 'No' to God, but welcome his forgiven
friends into his good kingdom forever.



6)

Baptism: A symbol of a new life

For many Christians

Being dirty: A symbol of what happens when you say no to God and live against what he asks. It is a symbol of needing to ask God for forgiveness, but not asking for it.

Being clean: A symbol of what it is like once God has forgiven you.

But what do you need in order to make you physically clean?...[Water](#). That is why [water](#) is the symbol at baptism. It is a symbol of being forgiven by God. Baptism is a symbol for saying that you would like to be forgiven by God.

But for many Christians, the symbol of baptism reminds Christians that they cannot 'clean' themselves; that they cannot get God to forgive them by being 'nice' people, but rather they need the hero of the Bible, Jesus to do that for them. Many Christians believe that Jesus in one sense needs to 'wash them' clean, as such to forgive them for what they have done wrong. Christians believe the only way to be forgiven by God is to believe that Jesus came to earth to 'wash people clean', to come to earth to make it possible for God to forgive them.



CLEAN



DIRTY



CLEAN



DIRTY

Task: Explain what many Christians believe the one big story of the Bible to be.

Do this, by using what we have looked at in this lesson; make a cartoon picture and some text next to it.

You can put it in your own words or use the words given in the pictures.

Title: What many Christians believe the one big story of the Bible to be

There should be 6 pictures with words

- 1) God is loving and made everything
- 2) People say no to God being in charge
- 3) People deserve punishment for not obeying God's rules
- 4) Jesus came to earth and died to take the punishment people deserve
- 5) Jesus came back to life. He will forgive those who ask him for forgiveness
- 6) Baptism: A symbol used by those who has asked God for forgiveness

