



WOW: Word Of the Week

Kintsugi

August 3, 2022

Jamie Simmons and I meet regularly for Bible study, working through various biblical texts, thinking about applications for our own lives, and also about applications in our teaching and preaching.

A few weeks ago, Jamie mentioned that he had taught a lesson based on the Japanese art of *kintsugi*. His comment piqued my interest and motivated me to research the subject a bit more. *Kintsugi* is the Japanese art of using gold to mend broken bowls or objects. Using gold dust (or silver or platinum) mixed into lacquer to restore objects gives them a new appearance. They are made beautiful again, perhaps more beautiful than they were previously as their brokenness and their broken places are accented.

One article noted that the process begins with the *kintsugi* artist sitting with the fragments, perhaps contemplating how the bowls might have been used in the past. A part of *kintsugi* is recognizing and honoring the past, affirming brokenness, believing in future possibilities. Breakage and repair are simply part of the history of the object.

The principle is true for people as well as bowls. Many people, after going through a period of brokenness, pain, and hurt have become more useful vessels. God's restoring power puts our earthen vessels back together to give us even greater glory. Paul calls it "from glory to glory" in 2 Cor. 3:17-18. We were created with glory as "image of God" people, but that glory is marred and torqued by the broken places of life.... In Christ, glory is restored as we are transformed into his image.

Our brokenness is a part of who we are. Thankfully, in Christ we do not have to remain broken! Our past does not define us. We can be remade. I encourage you with two thoughts.

First, brokenness can be the pathway to greater beauty, others may see the beauty of Jesus in us. That is the *kintsugi* process applied to people.

Second, I think of the healing process for broken bones. Brokenness not only leads to greater beauty, but also to becoming stronger. We become strong in the broken places.

I pray that these two realities might become yours, that you will find heart to seek Christ. He wants to take our brokenness and make it beautiful and strong.