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Kintsugi - Transformed by the Potter's Touch

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And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do. (Jeremiah 18:4)



Beauty from brokenness. In 2020, world-famous Japanese artist Makoto Fujimura was invited by the School of Visual Art and Design to speak at Southern for Convocation. Makoto is a Christian and has written extensively about the ancient Japanese art form of kintsugi, which translated means "golden joinery." Kintsugi is the art of mending broken pottery with gold and provides a glimmering symbol of hope and resilience in Japanese culture. It is based on the idea that when something breaks, it does not mean it is worthless, rather it can be mended – transforming its flaws into something beautiful. Just as the technique of kintsugi takes broken vessels and creates something beautiful, God promises that He can take the brokenness of our lives and fill it with His everlasting love.

In Jeremiah 18:4, the prophet sees a local potter forming clay—he then observes how the potter skillfully reworks spoiled clay, transforming it into a new vessel. Jeremiah uses the potter's ability to recreate ruined clay as a metaphor to remind Israel of God's care for His people. Similar to the ancient art of kintsugi, the potter reworks the clay that has been ruined instead of throwing it away as worthless. The potter's hands have the power to transform it into something even more beautiful.

Just like broken clay, sin has broken us but through God's grace it does not need to ruin us. We have the assurance that God will not discard us when we trust in Him, instead He restores us through forgiveness. The potter's touch can provide us with both strength and transformation. No matter how great our brokenness or sin, when we allow

ourselves to be in God's hands, He has the ability to create something truly beautiful from our broken pieces.

No one likes to be broken by life's circumstances. Whether it is the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, or struggling with illness - these situations can take their toll on us and leave us feeling broken and helpless. When trials come, it can be difficult to find the strength and courage needed to confront them. However, we can take comfort in knowing that our Heavenly potter is powerful enough to put broken pieces back together. He will restore what sin has shattered either now or in the future as we wait for Him with hope and faith.

Just as kintsugi shows us the beauty of transformation from brokenness, God embraces us with hope by offering to take the broken pieces of our lives and create something beautiful. Ellen White writes, "And as the clay is in the hands of the potter, so are we to be in His hands. We are not to try to do the work of the potter. Our part is to yield ourselves to be molded by the Master Worker." (1)

Today, may we look to God for comfort and strength as we rely on His powerful transforming touch. Like the potter, God can take our broken pieces and transform them into a masterpiece.

REFLECTION

1. What broken pieces in my life is God inviting me to bring to Him?
2. How can I rely on God's transforming touch today?
3. In what ways have I seen brokenness transformed into beauty?

NEWS & RESOURCES

- Join us for a special Vespers this Friday evening at 7:30 in the University Church for *Missions Vespers*!
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here](#).
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief, call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.

1) Ellen Gould White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1905), 472.