

Weekly Newsletter: 9th May 2023

Reflection: Kintsugi – creating beauty from brokenness

By Lorna Ferguson

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3

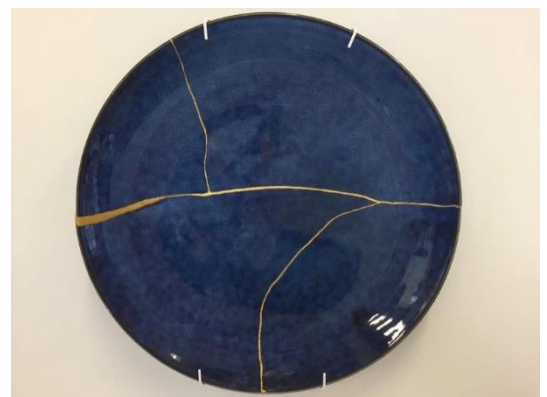
The other day I broke my favourite mug. It was a gift from a friend a few years ago. Not only was it a reminder of both the friendship and of Scotland, but it was also the perfect size for my daily mug of coffee. I feel both sad and annoyed with myself for not having been more careful. Right now it is still sitting on my shelf because I can't quite bring myself to throw it out!

Most Japanese bowls and cups are earthenware, made from clay. A Japanese meal will usually comprise several different items, each in their own bowl or small plate. So a typical household in Japan will have a plethora of small bowls and dishes.

The earthquake and tsunami of 2011 destroyed many houses and their contents, including a large amount of earthenware dishes. One Christian lady was helping to clear out a park in that area and began saving some of the many pieces of broken pottery. She wondered if she could make something beautiful out of all of the devastation around.

The next year she started to gather a group of women to make accessories out of the broken pottery. Some professionals then came to teach them how to make jewellery and the women started to make beautiful necklaces, earrings and other items and sell them worldwide. The Nozomi Project was born (Nozomi means “hope” in Japanese). Not only were the women able to make beautiful accessories out of the broken pottery, but they were also able to earn money doing so, when so many sources of employment in that area had been destroyed.

There is another Japanese way of bringing beauty out of brokenness – the art of ‘kintsugi’. Rather than throwing away a broken plate or bowl, the pieces of pottery are put back together with gold lacquer. In some ways it might seem a strange thing to do – the repair with gold usually costs more than the original item. Also, rather than conceal the break, the lacquer accentuates it. And yet this is the beauty of kintsugi. It embraces the brokenness and highlights the imperfections, and as a result creates something unique and more valuable.



In many ways the art of kintsugi is a reflection of the gospel. In 2 Corinthians 4:7-10 Paul writes: “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.”

As we live in this fallen world, we are surrounded by brokenness. We experience brokenness in our own lives too. Jars of clay can crack and break easily. Yet Psalm 147:3 tells us that the Lord “heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds”. God is like the master kintsugi artist. When we are broken, he doesn’t toss us aside or get rid of us. Rather, he is close to us and saves us (Psalm 34:16). In his grace he puts the broken pieces back together, and in that process, creates something even more beautiful.

We may feel that the scars which result from our brokenness are an ugly reminder of what was. But in God’s hands those scars can become something precious. Jesus’ resurrected body still bore the scars of His crucifixion in his hands, feet and side. As Matthew Bridges wrote in his well-known hymn, Crown Him With Many Crowns: “behold his hands and side, rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified”.

Jerry Sittser’s wife, mother, and one of his daughters were killed in an accident with a drunk driver. Three years later, he wrote the book, ‘A Grace Disguised: how the soul grows through loss’. He talks often in the book about the brokenness which resulted from such a tragic loss. Yet, by the end of the book he is able to write:

“The supreme challenge to anyone facing catastrophic loss involves facing the darkness of the loss on the one hand, and learning to live with renewed vitality and gratitude on the other. This challenge is met when we learn to take the loss into ourselves and to be enlarged by it, so that our capacity to live life well and to know God intimately increases...Loss can function as a catalyst to transform us. It can lead us to God, the only One who has the desire and power to give us life.”

Just yesterday I heard a Japanese pastor speak about a time when he was asked to resign from a previous church or be fired. He said that at the time it was the worst thing which had happened in his life, but looking back it was the best thing, because God met him there, challenged him and transformed him.

May we trust that God will be close to us in our brokenness, that He will bind us up by His grace, and in doing so create something even more beautiful.

Defibrillator Training



Last call! Please sign up to be trained in how to use the defibrillator. As you may have seen, a defibrillator has been fitted to the front of our building. Gillian Pickering has offered to provide training for anyone interested.

Please complete the google form [here](#) to let us know if you’d like to attend and we’ll be in touch with more details. Thank you!

New Member – Martha Scott



Hi! I'm Martha and I am 10 years old and I've been going to Holyrood since I was born. Last Sunday I joined the church and took communion. I did this because I love Jesus and wanted to show my faith openly. I have grown up knowing and loving Jesus. I've been brought up in a Christian home and every day I've heard the Bible. As I've grown, I've started to think about my faith more and I've realised how sinful I am and that Jesus died for my sins. I still feel like I have lots of questions to ask but I am understanding more as I grow.

Over this Easter and at Word Alive I have thought about my faith more and decided to talk to Joe about joining the church. I am so thankful that I can be part of such a kind and loving church family and have heard the good news of Jesus dying for my sins. Thank you for praying for me all these years. Could you keep praying for school that the language and behaviour would improve and that I will be salt and light in my class? Thank you.

Litter Pick with Friends of Montgomery Street Park

Our next litter pick up will take place on Sunday 21st May (a week on Sunday) after the morning service with the Friends of Montgomery Street Park.

Meet over in the park from 12 noon until 1pm (but don't feel that you have to stay for long). All the equipment will be provided and the church will be providing hot drinks and biscuits.



Book Group – Saturday 27th May

This month's book group meeting is on 27 May at 3.30pm and we are reading *The hole in our holiness* by Kevin DeYoung. If you would like further information please speak to Anncris (anncris@gmail.com).

Os Guinness is in town!

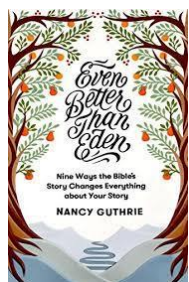


Continuing their series of Edinburgh events, Trinity Forum Europe is hosting **An Evening With Os Guinness**, exploring "Our Civilisational Moment: The Waning of the West, the War of the Worlds, and the Faith That Will Be Key to the Outcome."

This event will take place on **Tuesday, 16 May** from 18:30 to 20:00 in the Dunedin

Room at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Edinburgh, EH1 1TH. This event is free, but registration is required. For more information and to RSVP go [here](#).

Nancy Guthrie is in town!



Nancy Guthrie is coming to Scotland in September and will be doing an evening session on Wednesday 6 September from 7.30pm- 9.30pm at Grace Church Leith.

She'll be giving two messages from her book 'Even Better Than Eden'. Nancy's a great author and speaker. Tickets can be bought [here](#) or contact Liz (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) as there is a group from church going together.

CARE for Scotland

Liam McArthur MSP is proposing a Bill in the Scottish Parliament to legalise assisted suicide. This will undermine the right to life and put vulnerable people at risk of coming under pressure to end their lives prematurely. If you are able, please consider signing the Care Not Killing petition [here](#).

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday: No Baby and Toddler and Warm Space
- Tuesday: Communication Team at 7.30-8.30pm on Zoom
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Thursday: Women's Bible Study at 10.30am in the church
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Home Groups



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