

# KINTSUGI

## EXPLORATION GUIDE

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*The W* with Craig Detweiler & Mako Fujimura

# 1

Makoto Fujimura explains how the word kintsugi comes from two other Japanese words – kin (“gold”) and tsugi (“to mend”). By mending it with gold, the artist makes the pottery more beautiful and valuable than it was before. Mako also describes how we have a similar understanding of tending the soil in a garden by restoring and repairing it in ways to enhance the nutrients needed for gardening.

**Were you familiar with the art form and concept of kintsugi before this film? Have you seen this idea implemented in other ways to repair things that are broken?**

# 2

There was a resurgence in the interest of kintsugi after the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in March 2011. People used kintsugi to repair some of their broken pottery, which seemed to bring a measure of healing to their trauma. In his reflection video, the kintsugi master, Kunio Nakamura adds “... people don’t just want to do kintsugi in order to fix a vessel. I think they want to heal a wound inside themselves... As I’m doing kintsugi, I wonder, what is beautiful anyway? You start to see the beauty in broken things.”

**Have you had any similar experiences in your life where you found something tangible that you could repair or restore during a time you were experiencing trauma? Did that process contribute to your healing? Like Kunio, are you learning to see the beauty in broken things?**

# 3

Mako describes how traumatic events have informed some of the most influential works of art and literature we have. He believes that without trauma, we would lose 80% of the world’s art. This provides a significant way of understanding art. Mako also argues it is an important way to understand the fabric of our society and the communities we live in. Cf. Jeremiah 29

**Think about some of the works of art, music and literature that have had a significant impact on you. Which of those were influenced by trauma, pain and/or conflict? How do you think experiences of trauma provide an important perspective on our communities and society?**

# 4

At the end of the film, Mako describes how the concepts of kintsugi might influence our understanding of the Gospel. “Kintsugi reminds us that sometimes instead of throwing away things of the past, that it’s good to work them in and do it beautifully. To me, the Gospel reads that Christ came not just to fix us, but to restore us to create something new, which is more valuable than what we began with.” Cf. Matt. 5-7, Isaiah 58

**How do you respond to this perspective on the Gospel and Mako’s understanding of restoration and redemption? Have you seen examples of this in your own life?**