

A Fresh Wind of the Spirit Sweeps Churches in Great Britain, Page 82



The Magazine About Spirit-led Living

# Charisma

& Christian Life

October 1994

\$2.95

## WOUNDED HEALERS



**GOD IS VISITING  
AMERICA'S  
FORGOTTEN PEOPLE**

**Page 24**

**HEALING AMERICA'S  
WOUNDS**

**By John Dawson**

**Page 32**

Pastor Silas Correa  
of Denver's Indian  
Bible Church

# The Statue That Speaks



**T**he image is riveting. A muscular Jesus, clad only in a towel, bows low to wash Peter's feet. The apostle's hands grip his own legs in shock, conveying the question, "What kind of Master would do this for me?"

People walk by it and burst into tears. Three employees at the foundry that casts the bronze sculpture came to salvation after seeing it. A child at the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Anaheim, California, best expressed its power: "If you want to see Jesus' face, you've got to get way down on your face!"

In an era when blasphemous and erotic art has captured headlines, *Divine Servant* has become a striking Christian memorial. Jim Buick, former CEO of Zondervan Publishing House, liked the statue so much he put one in front of his company headquarters in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

**There's something uncanny  
about Max Greiner's  
bronze sculpture.**

**Some people say they've  
been drawn closer to the  
Savior after seeing this image  
of Christ's servanthood.**

Says Buick: "Having a sculpture of Christ there reminded us of the things we're here to do. We're here to serve."

*Divine Servant* is more than a sculpture, though. It illustrates how one man who yielded to God's direction discovered an unusual avenue for ministry to thousands of people. It also proves that lay people can reach others for Christ through their careers.

Texas artist Max Greiner Jr. and his wife, Sherry, have witnessed the miracle-working power of God since he was baptized in the Holy Spirit during the 1989 Christian Booksellers Association (CBA) convention. It had only been a few months since Greiner's original sculpture went on sale.

*Continued on page 56*

*Divine Servant* and *Christian Butterfly* are registered trademarks.

**S**





*A life-size cast of the first Divine Servant awaits inspection by Monte Paddleford (left), former Zondervan executive Jim Buick and artist Max Greiner Jr. at Paddleford's Wyoming foundry in 1990.*

That summer was a special one for Greiner, who lives in the tiny town of Kerrville, Texas, northwest of San Antonio. Though he gave his life to Christ at age 7, his faith had become lukewarm. An avid archer, he believed he didn't need to spend a lot of time in church since he could worship God outdoors.

Today Greiner has put God's priorities first. Since he encountered the power of the Holy Spirit, the 42-year-old artist has stopped counting how many people have been healed after he has prayed for them.

"When Max prays, things happen," says Becky Jons, who met the artist when she spoke at her church. She was healed of three different ailments after Greiner prayed for her and has accompanied him on several healing missions.

Apart from his behind-the-scenes prayer ministry, Greiner's popular sculpture has gained prominence in recent years because it symbolizes what the Christian faith is all about. The artist acknowledges that it is "just a piece of metal," but he says the Holy Spirit is

using it in a profound way.

"It draws people," Greiner says of his life-changing creation. "Nonbelievers come to it, and God will have a believer

**In an era when  
blasphemous and erotic  
art has captured  
headlines, *Divine  
Servant* has become a  
striking Christian  
memorial.**

standing there to pray with them. The Holy Spirit has used it to attract them."

Two years after its debut as a 10-inch-high statuette, *Divine Servant* became a life-size bronze, 5 feet 6 inches high. Zondervan purchased the first \$60,000

casting for its headquarters. Dallas Baptist University also purchased one.

"It's been an important symbol," says John Clem, the university's vice president. "There's rarely a gathering on campus when someone doesn't mention it. It's a tangible reminder of what our president seeks as our direction."

Chicago artist Ron DiCianni, who has illustrated most of the covers for Frank Peretti's novels, applauds the visual form of *Divine Servant* and its new way of speaking to the Christian community. He especially likes the way the sculpture reinforces the concept of servant leadership.

"If there's anything in our society that is appalling to people, it's the idea of service," DiCianni says. "We're supposed to be the winners and guys on top, right?"

"I think it's time we use everything at our disposal to get the servanthood message out," he says. "That's what Max has done with his sculpture."

Ten of Greiner's life-size bronzes are displayed in five states and in Toronto, Ontario, and Seoul, South Korea. More than a thousand smaller versions in

porcelain and pewter have been sold in Christian bookstores.

Greiner hauls the 1,200-pound life-size bronze around the country on a specially built trailer; it was on display recently at Focus on the Family's new Colorado headquarters and at Promise Keepers rallies in Colorado, Texas and Indiana.

Churches, universities, media outlets, civic groups and evangelists also have invited Greiner to display the sculpture and give his dynamic testimony. Whenever the sculpture goes, Greiner is usually nearby, praying with someone to be introduced to Christ or healed or baptized in the Holy Spirit.

#### A QUESTION OF OBEDIENCE

*Divine Servant*, a sculpture that celebrates the humility of Jesus Christ, has taught Greiner a lot about humility, too. And the process the artist went through to cast the unusual image taught him about obedience as well.

"Max, I want you to do a sculpture of Jesus washing Peter's feet," the artist believes he heard God say in the spring of 1986. With little excitement, he responded, "But Lord, what about these other things I'm doing right now?"

At that point he was chasing his own star, Greiner admits. At the time, his work included wildlife paintings, sculptures and jewelry that launched his solo art career in 1978. He put God's idea aside and pursued other projects for six months. Then God moved again.

After trying for two weeks to design some jewelry for his wife's birthday, he prayed, "God, I give up. I need a good idea quick, please!"

An image of the ichthus fish symbol with butterfly wings came to mind. He called it the *Christian Butterfly*. It became a beautiful gift for Sherry and the basis for thousands of auto emblems, ornaments, key rings and jewelry.

But Greiner had not yet obeyed the Lord, according to longtime friend Jim Beard, a Spirit-filled Methodist. Beard was going to see Max and Sherry in the spring of 1987 when he sensed the Lord was saying, "You tell Max that

until he does the bronze nothing else he does will be successful."

When Beard shared this message, the artist's response was smug. "If God wants me to know that, He'll tell me," Greiner told his friend.

It wasn't long before sales of Greiner's secular art ground to a halt. He soon decided to yield to the Holy Spirit.

To prepare for the sculpting, Greiner,

**"It's time we use everything at our disposal to get the servanthood message out."**

**—Artist Ron DiCianni**

his wife and Beard took turns washing each other's feet. Greiner says he didn't realize until then that it's "harder to have someone wash your feet than it is for you to wash theirs."

"Now I have an idea of how Peter felt," he says.

Greiner never expected any financial success from *Divine Servant*. He even asked Beard if he thought anyone would want one of the sculptures.

"The Lord didn't say this would sell," Beard answered. "He said nothing else would sell until you do this. I don't think this is a deal He's necessarily going to bless you through. The question is, are you going to be obedient to what God wants or not?"

The rest is history. Among the doors the sculpture opened for Greiner were two speaking engagements at Dallas Theological Seminary, where a life-size sculpture was unveiled last April. He also has shared his testimony with Christian leaders, including John Wimber, evangelist Luis Palau, author Max Lucado and—by cassette tape—Billy Graham.

Everywhere he goes, Greiner talks openly about his experience with the Holy Spirit. However, with noncharismatic audiences, he uses nonthreatening terms. "I focus on [the need] to yield 100 percent to God's will and [to ask] for whatever abilities He wants to give," the artist says.

#### AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE SPIRIT

A third-generation Southern Baptist, Greiner never heard of the baptism in the Holy Spirit until July 1989 in Atlanta. An hour before the CBA convention ended, he saw a friend walking up an aisle on the crowded floor.

"Debbie, where's your cane?" he asked the formerly crippled woman, who had endured three hip replacements. She related how a man in an adjacent booth noticed her discomfort and prayed for her. Her leg grew out, all the pain left, and she threw away her cane. *Continued on page 60*



Intrigued, Max and Sherry went to talk with Bill Banks, the man who had prayed for Debbie. A former insurance salesman who had been healed of terminal cancer, Banks told Greiner about "a second experience" that could empower him for ministry.

"Would you pray to receive whatever God has for you?" Banks asked.

"Sure," Max nodded. "This doesn't mean I have to speak in tongues, does it?"

"After this, you may be able to," Banks replied with a smile.

Driving home, Max and Sherry stopped at a motel. There he prayed, "Lord, if this tongues thing is real, then I'm willing." That night he received a new prayer language. Sherry, a Nazarene, also was baptized in the Spirit.

Two months after Max received tongues, God's healing power began to manifest itself. He wound up at a stranger's home after a meeting in which he had been commissioned to create a set of wind chimes.

While waiting to go to dinner, the host began sharing deep personal concerns. He was gradually losing the use of his hands and feet, and he faced exploratory surgery in two days.

"I want you to pray for him," Greiner heard the Lord whisper.

"But I hardly know these people," he responded. "There are two Southern Baptist missionaries sitting here. Can't You get them to do it?"

Finally, Greiner yielded. A few days later the missionaries came to see him with an exciting story. Not only did the man receive healing, but his wife and one of the missionaries did also.

Similar incidents followed. Women who had been sexually or physically abused opened their hearts to Max and Sherry. The Greiners led them to forgive their offenders, and as a result, many of the women found their own healing. Others were freed of genetic afflictions, cancer, hip and back pain, damaged knees, and suicidal impulses.

At a 1991 Luis Palau Crusade in San Antonio, the Greiners prayed for a woman who had used crutches for eight years. She threw them away and walked across the lobby. Later the evangelist told Max, "If you are giving God the glory for the healings, and the people are giving God the glory, then keep on praying."



**"It's harder to have someone wash your feet than it is for you to wash theirs. Now I have an idea of how Peter felt."**

**—Artist Max Greiner Jr.**

Last April Greiner prayed for Carol Binegar, an airline reservation agent, after they met at a convention in Dallas. Though she sought healing of a rare genetic condition, she realized later that a painful bone spur had vanished.

"I know in my heart the Lord healed my foot," says Binegar, a member of a conservative, nondenominational church. "What I hope is that I can testify to the reality of Christ."

Not everyone greets such miracles with joy. Greiner says some of his friends have shunned him or even ridiculed him.

But opposition hasn't discouraged Greiner from pursuing his dreams. If he can find time between speaking engagements, he hopes to do another sculpture of Jesus. In all his work, Greiner hopes people will see Jesus and not the sculptor.

#### RECLAIMING THE ARTS FOR GOD

Greiner also hopes he can help redeem the arts for God's glory.

"I'm convinced God put artists here to uplift people," says Greiner, who worked

as an architect for several years before tackling art full time.

"Art is more than a product," he says. "It's a process that gives us insight and gives us something back that is lasting. It stimulates and challenges us to think. You won't get that from your toaster, VCR or stock certificates."

Greiner knows all too well that the arts need to be reclaimed. Last year, he recalls, the Christian Action Network assembled a display of art that was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. The display included scenes of medieval torture, decapitated human heads and an image of Christ as a nude woman.

Despite such outrageous displays, Greiner points out that, historically, art has glorified God. He cautions that the degeneration of popular art into shock treatment should not turn Christians away from trying to express themselves with art.

Artist DiCianni agrees: "The church has decided to abdicate what once was our realm in getting its message out. We need every means of communication to say the things we know God wants said in our society."

Not all Christians agree, of course. Greiner has received letters from believers who contend that he shouldn't do a sculpture of Jesus because the second commandment prohibits the worship of graven images.

"It's OK to be doing art that glorifies God," Greiner says, "we're just not supposed to worship it."

Greiner doesn't want anyone to worship his image of Christ washing Peter's feet. But he is praying that the world will hear the message that his work communicates in its own quiet way.

He hopes his sculpture will introduce Christians and non-Christians alike to a divine Servant—the God who stripped Himself of His own deity, came to earth in the form of a man and then washed the feet of His own disciples.

Says Greiner: "The Lord wants to confront this world with His disarming, selfless love. I just want to be a channel of that love." ■

**Ken Walker** is a free-lance writer based in Louisville, Kentucky, and a frequent contributor to *Voice* magazine.