

SERIOUS CHRISTIANS

During the 1970s when our church was experiencing a period of rich blessing with frequent conversions and rapid growth, several other churches in town grew jealous and rumours about us began to spread. It was being said that our growth was due to us being sheep stealers. One of our elders had a great answer to this, he said we were not sheep stealers, we just grew better grass.

When we would not join with others in ecumenical evangelism it was said we did not believe in evangelism. This in spite of the fact that each year we published and distributed door to door 15000 evangelistic booklets. And every Saturday we had an open air meeting in the market place.

But the rumour I liked the most was that we were the serious Christians. I could not argue with that because we were. We were not miserable or solemn, but we were serious. We were serious about our worship, serious about our faith and serious about evangelism. We did not believe you could laugh people into the kingdom of God, but we did believe you could weep them in. We did not believe it was our business to entertain sinners but we did believe it was our business to confront sinners with God and pray for their conversion.

Serious Christians are committed Christians. Nehemiah is known for his hard work in getting the walls of Jerusalem repaired, but he did not do it on his own. We are told in Nehemiah 4:6 that the people had a mind to work (AV). Or as the NIV puts it they 'worked with all their heart'. Such believers do not have to be persuaded or shamed into action; there is a desire to serve God born of their attitude of mind. Seriousness breeds commitment.

In these days of happy-slappy Christians we could do with some seriousness in our faith. Serious believers know when to let their hair down and have some fun, but they also know how to cry to the Lord for the lost. 'Those who go out **weeping**, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.' [Psalm 126:5-6](#)