## Sunday School Lesson

(Continued from Page 2)

The authority of Paul and Barnabas was not the authority of ordination. Their authority was that of the effective working of the Spirit of God in their own lives. The church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem as "men who (had) risked believe that the Jerusalem Coun-Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 15: a working, practical religion.

"Churches have been eager for statements in Galatians do not 2:19) "For freedom Christ has in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3: the specious authority of wealth reflect the spirit of compromise. set us free; stand fast therefore, 26-28) and social position. They lose sight of the only authority which speaks with a compelling voice, that of service and sacrifice, of hazarded life in a world

## An Inclusive Religion?

The Book of Acts leads us to their lives for the sake of our cil ended in some sort of compromise on the issue, giving 26) Their religion was not a Paul all the liberty he needed formal, theoretical religion but for his work among the gentiles but restricting the Jewish con-Halford Luccock in comment- verts to the observance of the

For him the new freedom in and do not submit again to a was no going back to the former 1) bondage under the law.

Paul did on occasion accept some Jewish cultic requirements in order not to offend conservative members of the church, but the fact remands that the Jerusalem church decided against circumcision as a requirement for the gentile converts and thus cut Christianity free from legalistic hindrances. "For I thought nor Greek, there is neither slave the law died to the law, that I nor free, there is neither male ing on this passage wrote: Jewish law. However, Paul's might live to God." (Galatians nor female; for you are all one

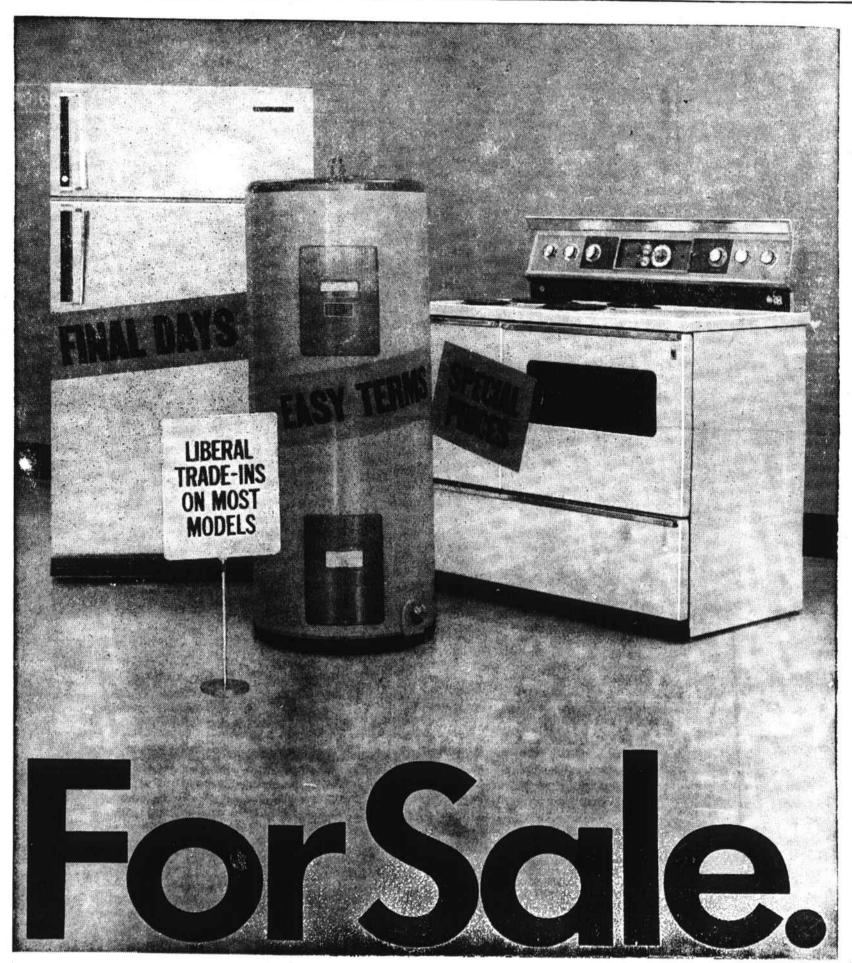
Paul saw in Christ far more than a Jewish Messiah; he saw in Christ the Savior of all mankind, Greek as well as Jew. For Paul, Jews had no more rights than did the Greeks or the barbarians. No one nation had "an inside track." "In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. . . . There is neither Jew

For Paul, Christianity was Christ was absolute, and there yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5: not a law to obey but a Christ to follow. For him, Christianity was not a sect of Judaism but the Body of Christ, of which all men could be members through faith.

## What Do You Think?

Why do men try to establish requirements and standards for membership in the church? How did Paul's understanding of the requirements of membership differ from that of the Judaizers? Do any of our own church's re-

(Continued on Page 6)



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