



# Studies in the Life of Christ

- INTRODUCTION
- THE EARLY PERIOD
- THE MIDDLE PERIOD
- THE FINAL WEEK

R.C. Foster

## R.C.FOSTER ON THE NEW BIRTH:

When Nicodemus uttered his astounded protest of the impossibility of a second birth physically, Jesus responded with a reaffirmation and further definition of the new birth:

"Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." There is but one preposition "of" and no article in the Greek with either "water" or "spirit". It refers to one single action - the redemption of the individual soul.

The birth of water evidently means baptism - the completing step in the rebirth of the individual. The birth of Spirit suggests the whole spiritual transformation which takes place in the spirit of the individual as he turns through faith and repentance to solemnly dedicate himself to God in the act of baptism. The primary reference is evidently to the Spirit of God and hence the revisers inserted a "the" and capitalized the word "Spirit". The Holy Spirit comes into contact with the spirit of man in the preaching of the Word and man comes from the world into the glorious kingdom of God through the new birth which is a change of mind, heart and life (faith and repentance) and a change of state (baptism). The Greek verb translated "be born" means either "to beget" or "to bring forth"; hence man is begotten of the Spirit of God and is born of water. The reference to immersion is inescapable. In the act of baptism the whole man - body, mind and soul - is buried and comes forth a new creature in Christ.