The Third Century
History: The Early Church

"In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense [Greek *apologia] to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you."*
1 Peter 3:15

Theme: Five Highlights of the Third Century

1. The Rise of **Apostacy:** *A Wrong Response to Persecution*
    - The Aim of the **Persecutors:** *Apostacy*
        - Emperor **Septimius Severus** (202-211).
        - Emperor **Trajan Decius** (249-251).
    - The Response of the **Persecuted**
        - Those who **Died:** *Martyrs*
        - Those who **Suffered:** *Confessors*
        - Those who **Denied:** *Lapsed or Apostates*

2. The Rise of **Catholicism:** *Early Warning Signs of Roman Catholic Christianity*
    - The Rise of **Salvation through Baptism**
        - Led to **Infant Baptism**
        - Led to **Lent**
    - The Rise of **Authority through Bishops**
        - Led to **Synods and Councils**
        - Led to **the Pope and Apostolic Succession**
    - The Rise of **Forgiveness through Penance**
        - Rejected by **Novatian:** *The Church is a Society of Saints*
        - Affirmed by **Cornelius:** *The Church is a School of Sinners*

3. The Rise of **Monarchianism:** *Heresy Denying the Trinity*
    - **Adoptionism:** *God is One Person Who Adopted Christ at Baptism*
    - **Modalism:** *God is One Person Who Operates in Three Modes*
4. The Rise of **Apologists:** *Early Defenders of the Faith*
    - **Clement of Alexandria** *(c. 150-211): An Unhelpful Harmonizer*
    - **Tertullian of Carthage** (c. 160-225): *A Trinitarian Attorney*
    - **Origen of Alexandria** (c. 185-253): *An Influential Interpreter*
    - **Cyprian of Carthage** (c. 205-258): *An Innovative Bishop*

5. The Rise of **Seminary:** *Early Centers to Train Apologists*

    - School of **Alexandria**
        - Stressed **Divinity** of Christ
        - Stressed **Allegorical** Interpretation

    - School of **Antioch**
        - Stressed **Humanity** of Christ
        - Stressed **Literal** Interpretation

The Third Century:
A Timeline

- 202 Emperor Severus Begins Persecution
- 215 Origen Begins Writing
- C.220 Tertullian Dies
- 235 Emperor Maximus Begins Persecution
- 248 Cyprian Elected Bishop of Carthage
- 249 Emperor Decius Begins Persecution
- 254 Death of Origen
- 257 Emperor Valerian Begins Persecution
- 269 Council of Antioch: Paul of Samosata
- 271 St. Anthony Becomes First Monk
- 284 Emperor Diocletian Enters Power