

LESSON 5: MEDIEVAL MONASTICISM

**Church History 102:
The Medieval Church**

AGENDA

- **Overview Monasticism**
- **Contrast East and West**
- **Consider Benefits and Problems**

MEDIEVAL MONKS?



WHAT IS MONASTICISM?

Monasticism is an institutionalized religious movement or practice in which members attempt to live by a religious rule requiring separation from society and/or worldly concerns to do works that go beyond those of the laity or ordinary spiritual leaders

- **Origins in the 3rd century as Christians want to escape Roman society**
- **Becomes more widespread once Christianity legalized (and paganized) in 4th century**

THREE TYPES OF MONASTICISM

- **Eremitic -> hermits**
- **Cenobitic -> communities**
- **Skete -> hybrid**
- **For both men and women**
- **Poverty, celibacy, and consecration**

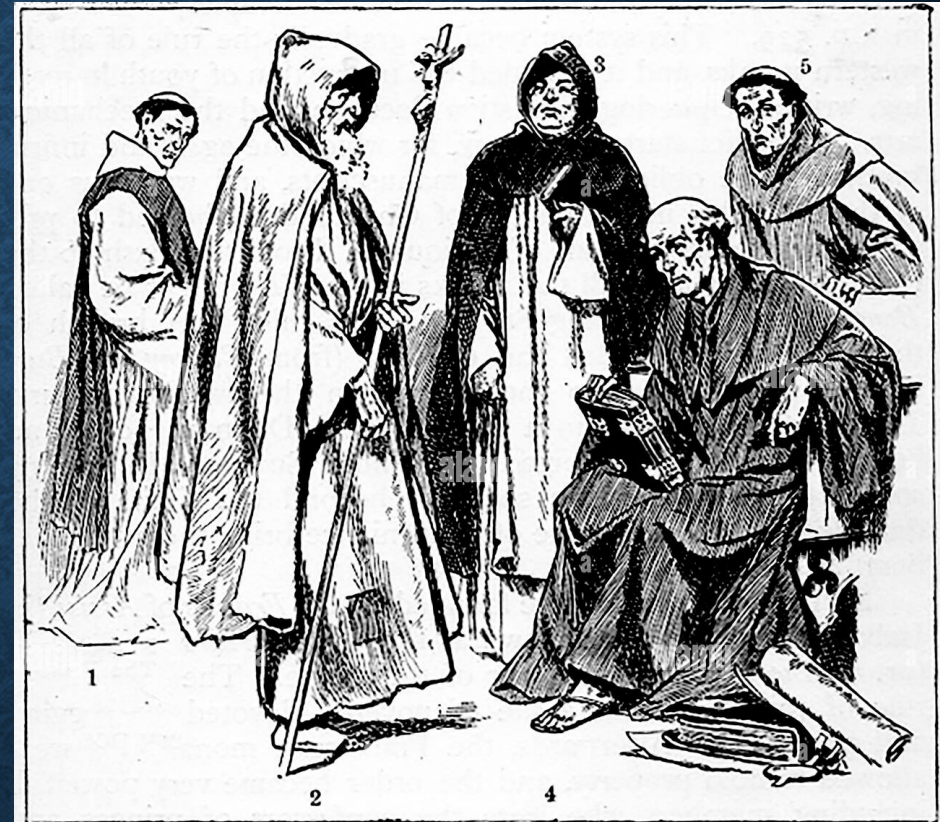


MONASTIC DIFFERENCES

- **West, cenobitic**
- **Emphasis on culture and education**
- **Benedict of Nursia influential**
- **Different monastic orders emerge**
- **Syria/Egypt, eremitic**
- **Greek/Byzantine, mixture**
- **Basil of Caesarea influential**
- **The Studium and Mt. Athos (Hesychasm)**

FOUR MAJOR WESTERN ORDERS

- **Cluniacs, 909,
Reform/Worship**
- **Cistercians, 1098,
Reform/Simplicity**
- **Franciscans, 1210,
Mendicant Ministers**
- **Dominicans, 1217,
Mendicant Preachers**



Group of Monastic Orders.

1, Cistercian; 2, Franciscan (mendicant); 3, Dominican; 4, Benedictine;
5, Franciscan.

BENEFITS OF MEDIEVAL MONASTICISM

- 1. Excellent Christian Education**
- 2. Disciplined Living**
- 3. Constant and Dedicated Prayer**
- 4. Excellent and Honest Civil Servants**
- 5. Steady Crop of Bishops and Missionaries**
- 6. Preservation of Ancient/Medieval Texts**
- 7. A Spiritual Anchor in Medieval Storms**

PROBLEMS OF MEDIEVAL MONASTICISM

- 1. Flimsy Biblical Foundation**
- 2. Emphasis on External Righteousness**
- 3. Promotion of Two-Tiered Christianity**
- 4. Victimization by Own Success**
- 5. Abuse as a Social Safety Net**
- 6. Monastic Rivalry**
- 7. Unbelieving Members and Leaders**