It can easily be demonstrated that Pride is the root of all evil. At the Fall, Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan to an act of disobedience that promised them equality with the all-knowing God. It was the temptation to overrule God’s plan for His own creation. It was an unlawful attempt to elevate the created to the same level of the Creator, and to pretend to be what the created could never be - equal with God, wise enough to pass judgment with no authority and become the masters of their own destiny, rather than faithful and obedient to God’s plan. Armed with false knowledge, the created is filled with self-importance, demands praise for himself, and gives faint credit, if at all, to the Author of true knowledge.

In modern terms a great deal more emphasis is now placed on what Man has accomplished rather than what God has accomplished through Man. Knowledge was formerly tested by the ages, emanating from the Word of God and His mighty acts throughout all Creation and articulated in the Councils and in the Creeds. The publication of a book was a great accomplishment, and it required careful research and corroboration. In fact, the footnotes and bibliography were critical to the credibility of the book. Good thoughts with insufficient documentation would result in a rejected text or an “F” on a term paper. However, today people can create any reality they wish: they can create a Wikipedia Page, a Web site, and use Social media as platforms for misinformation. In a past generation this misinformation, in print, was generally confined to preposterous tabloids that were available by the check-out counter in the grocery store. Today people can post that misinformation on social media, and even create an article or site a reference that is based on opinion, and in some instances, paranoid thinking.

I have recently learned that “JFK was killed by the Mafia”, “Elvis is living in Hawaii”, “Aliens live in New Mexico”, and “Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene”! Since it is all in print and on social media, and web sites have been created to further these assertions, I guess it must be true - or is it? The existence of nonsense has always existed, but the age in which we live allows people with limited knowledge to use misinformation as if it were highly documented facts. This leads to pride - when we gather superficial information and then present it to others as if it were fact. This leads to judgment and condescension - expressions of pride, whereby our misinformation is used by us to show how uninformed everyone else is. It also means that my feelings and my opinions are always accurate, because they are mine, but yours are not accurate because I do not agree with you. When foundational “facts” are erroneous, no amount of credible information laid on top of error will transform the erroneous foundation. In the end we can recall what adults told us when we were children: there is a reason why we have two ears and one mouth; we should listen more and talk less. Finally, we live in an age that is very light on the critical thinking side but very heavy on the critical judgment side. As difficult as it may seem to some, our vocation in life as God’s creation is not to criticize and judge everything and every person. We need to recall that The Holy Scriptures are very clear about judgment: Only God can judge, and the way we judge others is the way we shall be judged. As bright as people may think they are, God has not asked us to serve Him in an advisory capacity - even if that was what Adam and Eve were led to be believe by Satan.