

It religion and death
are the main subjects



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

It is natural to form prejudice and sin by being deceptive to your own true self identity; it is apart of human heritage.

Flannery O'Conner, the former writer and short story essayist, expresses this idea in her short story titled "A Good Man is Hard to Find". Prejudice, religion and death are the main subjects of the short story, in which she strongly addresses not only human futile attempts to use religion to escape death but also how human identity is defined externally and easily manipulated. Similarly, Shirley Jackson in her short story "The Lottery" draws on death as an extreme metaphorical example of how societies get rid of innocent people for absurd prejudicial reasons. The lottery describes where society leads to if humans continue to follow the masses and in group selection, by not questioning their prejudices and long followed traditions critically. In a sense, Shirley's story begins where Conner's story ends, a fact that account for both the similarities and differences between the two works. The two essays can be compared on the basis of their subjects, and their use of common ideas.

So what is prejudice or sin and how might it lead to death? In "A Good Man is Hard to Find" prejudice can be metaphorically equated to sin as a preconceived opinion the grandmother had about the "Misfit" that was not based on reason or actual experience. The grandmother had prejudiced beliefs and feelings which caused her to act in a prejudiced way because she was conforming to what is regarded as normal within the social comfort of the group she belonged to. In response to this socialization, it is interesting to note the use of the word "MISFIT" the grandmother used to describe the killer. Moreover, being a "lady" was important for the grandmother's self identity. She asks if she looked like a lady so that the MISFIT wouldn't shoot

her which reflects the prejudice and hypocrisy that she still relied on for external justification and fulfilled it to a certain degree through her appearance and class. Again, the emphasis on status, prejudice and wealth is treated as a sin and is ultimately meaningless when compared to the final context of death when the Misfit shoots her. Similarly, "The Lottery" displays how prejudice and the pressure towards a traditional group not only intensifies pre-existing sentiments, but also begins cultivating a deep seated tribalism.

By using main characters whose snobbish and selfish personalities rigidly conform and reject those they consider to be inferiors, we go through the entire process of men in the society picking names from the blackbox. Ironically, we never know what the lottery is about or any kind of function. The sinful act of killing innocent Tessie and causing her death as she protests the decision is still being carried through as the remaining members of the society have learned to generalize and judge only according to one specific experience. Those who are persecuted become "marked" because of a trait or characteristic that is out of their control— for example Tessie's name being picked out of random chance from the blackbox. Though these works, in these ways, share some topics and aspects, their ideas are distinct and individual regarding religion.

Once the grandmother's prejudiced sentiment was on the scene, the stage was set for the arrival of religion to be referenced during her death scene. As she realizes the Misfit is going to shoot her, she begins to beg the MISFIT to pray to Jesus almost as if this can clear the MISFIT's conscience of all the evil deeds he has committed to be saved by god's grace. On the other hand, in <https://assignbuster.com/it-religion-and-death-are-the-main-subjects/>

the " Lottery" there is no direct reference to religion but the lottery itself serves as a symbol of sacrificial killing. Similarly, the black box serves as a symbol of omen on who will die that day and the society's eagerness to kill using stones as some sort of a holy ritual that everybody needed to take part in to glorify and sanctify themselves.

On a balance, both the differences and similarities between the stories strive to make their audiences make a universal commitment to the unity of humanity against prejudice or sin. Reference: O'Connor, Flannery. " A Good Man is Hard To Find." 1983. Jackson, Shirley.

" The Lottery." 1991.