

# Allie medina

[Religion](#), [God](#)



Allie Medina 2/20/13 " Good" People, Good Stories Many characters in short stories or novels can relate in one way or another whether it be the place or time period they are set in, their personalities, or their involvement with other characters. The storylines in " Good Country People" and " A Good Man is Hard to Find" are very similar, but the characters are somewhat different in how they act when put in a stressful situation. Flannery O'Connor uses her knowledge of religion in her stories and relates her characters to the life that is most familiar to her. She incorporates her faith in God into her stories which create a different feel to the plot and characters. In " Good Country People" and " A Good Man is Hard to Find", both stories are about a dysfunctional family who are deceived by a stranger who turns out to be a criminal. They compare in many other aspects as well. The grandmother in " A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and the woman in " Good Country People" both are stubborn in what they believe and how they want people to act around them. The grandmother wanted the children to act very polite and proper when they were around her and she also wanted the adults to act and believe the same way she did as well. The mother also acted very stubborn with the salesman when she first met him. She didn't want to believe what he had to say about the bible he was selling and he wasn't going to change her mind on the way she thought. The time period is also similar in both stories because they both take place in the 1950s. The comparisons in both stories obviously come from the writer Flannery O'Connor. She was living in this time and these stories were modern in their day which made them entertaining for all who read them. . Although there were many similarities in both stories, there were also some differences. In " A Good Man is Hard to

Find", the children and other adults play a large role in the plot and character development throughout the story as in " Good Country People", Mrs. Hopewell doesn't say much about her daughter that she ha, and the daughter doesn't appear in the story at all. The woman in " Good Country People" also changed her attitude towards her views about things because she fell in love with the thief. She put her trust in him and he betrayed her. " In A Good Man is Hard to Find" the grandmother doesn't really change the way she acted throughout the whole story. She was rude and obnoxious in the beginning of the trip, in the car accident, and after she died. Flannery O'Connor uses religion in most of her stories. She ties many of her ideas with monotheism and the beliefs that reside within it. O'Connor was a devout Catholic, and she combined her Christ-like attitude and wit to write her works which only became popular after she had died. It isn't even the underlying tone for her stories, as they literally ooze religion out of the lines and letters. In both stories she has an elusive definition to what a " good" man is. In " A Good Man is Hard to Find", the Grandmother always thinks people are " good. " It all starts with Red Sammy. After he was ripped off when 2 people weren't charged for their gasoline and he told the family that no one could trust anyone in those days. He also said that people don't look the way they act because the two boys that stole gas looked alright to him. This is also similar to today's age in the fact that typical and luxury items are worth more money. People who don't want to work for their belongings, lie and say they do special things to get things handed to them on a silver platter, or for free. After Red Sammy said he didn't charge them for the gas, the grandmother said, " Because you're a good man! " So that means that the

grandmother's definition of good is gullible and one who has poor judgment? The grandmother would rely on her faith to judge people and believe that everyone is good. In " Good Country People" Mrs. Hopewell believed that Manly Pointer was a good man after accepting his invitation to go on a date. Manly Pointer ended up being a thief who stole women's fake body parts. Mrs. Hopewell didn't realize he wasn't a bad guy until he started yelling at her and then proceeding on stealing her wooden leg. Overly religious people in my opinion are always naïve when it comes to judgment of good and bad people. They always have the best intentions when accepting people into their life, but sometimes they can end up not being a good person. They look for the best in people and sometimes there is no good in them such as the boys that lied to Red Sammy in " A Good Man is Hard to Find" and Manly Pointer in " Good Country People". Flannery O'Connor uses this idea as something that relates to her life. She was a religious woman who, in some way, was making fun of woman such as herself who would believe people because their belief in God would allow them to have no fear in being hurt by people. Another way Flannery O'Connor incorporated religion in her stories was describing the unlikely recipients of grace. In Christian theology, God bestows grace upon the people that deserve it by following his word and committing random acts of kindness. God also bestows grace upon those who don't necessarily deserve it. The grandmother and the Misfit both are undeserving of the good things grace can bring to one when they do good things. The grandmother lied to her grandchildren, manipulated her son, and complained constantly about the way people acted in the present compared to when she was young in the past. The Misfit obviously is an unrepentant

murderer. They both receive grace suggesting that even bad people like both characters can potentially be saved by God. The grandmother was moved by the Misfit's desire to know for sure what Jesus did or didn't do. The grandmother finds compassion in her heart, even after all of the horrible things that happened. Although the Misfit had claimed earlier that there was "no pleasure but meanness" in life, he now doesn't believe that there is any pleasure in life at all. Killing has stopped bringing him happiness, suggesting that he, too, may possibly have the change to change. In "Good Country People" Manly Pointer used Mrs. Hopewell to get to her wooden leg. He, however, had a slight glimpse of grace upon him when they were on their picnic. Although it may not have been real, he did say he cared about Mrs. Hopewell and he quite possibly may have, but the desire for more took over what could have been real feelings toward Mrs. Hopewell. Many authors can sometimes make their stories relatable in a way that people notice. The way Flannery O'Connor wrote these stories shows how realistic things were during that time period and also the twisted stories she could think up in her head at that time. The similarities and differences in both "Good Country People" and "A Good Man is Hard to Find" showed modern life during the 1950s and the strange things that can happen to people who are sucked into the lies of bad people.