The Family Story In A Good Man Is Hard To Find

Good is a very ordinary word, whose definition is to be desired or approved of. It's used to describe someone or something. The problem is how do we know if someone is truly good. Anyone can act as a good person but in reality, it could all be a lie they are telling to benefit in some way. You don't truly know a person after some casual conversations it takes time, just like anything else. The word good could also be used subjectively because take for example our current president many of his ideologies to me at least are very wrong like closing planned parenthood, while many of his own supporters support him and agree with him, many of the people who don't support him also don't agree with him. In the three stories we read, "Good People," "A Good Man is Hard to Find," and "Good Country People," that common word is good, so what makes someone good?

In "Good People," we read about two young Christians and how they are dealing with the news of a very unexpected pregnancy. It's being told in the third person point of view. It's also ironic that they claim to be "good" Christians, but they had premarital sex, which is one of the biggest promises that you make when you are a Christian to save yourself for marriage. When him and his girlfriend are sitting the narrator says, "His mother called her down to earth and liked her, though she was good people…"(Wallace), the way that the author wrote this makes it sound like the mom no longer has this idea of her, she is no longer, "good people." The protagonist is struggling internally with the concept of good, especially when the narrator says, "… sometimes when alone and thinking or struggling to turn a matter over to Jesus Christ in prayer, he would find himself putting his fist in his palm and turning it slightly as if still playing and pounding his glove to stay sharp and alert in center. He did not do this now; it would be cruel and indecent to do this now..." (Wallace). It is very clear that the protagonist is struggling to cope, he knows that his actions were wrong and that the person he always turns to in rough times can't help him because it goes against everything, he believes in. They are supposed to be good people but them thinking of even getting an abortion is already having them second guess their faith. The word "good" in this story is primarily used to describe their actions and them nothing more.

In, "A Good Man is Hard to Find," we read about a crazy grandmother and her family. This story takes place in Georgia and Tennessee, during a family trip that the grandmother invited herself too. The family originally planned to go to Florida, but the grandmother convinced them to go east to Tennessee, telling them they've already been to Florida. On the trip they to eat at a restaurant named, The Tower, here they meet Red Sammy Butts and his wife. While at the restaurant, Red says that people are untrustworthy, he says this because he let two men buy gas on credit. During this conversation is where we first hear, "a good man is hard to find," in this specific scene Red Sammy is referring to most people being difficult. While they are driving to their destination the grandma mentions a plantation and convinces everyone to go there, she then realizes the plantation is in Georgia and not Tennessee, but she doesn't tell anyone, and they end up getting an a car accident because of the grandma but she doesn't want to own up to her mistake, which can be seen as not very good. They come across the antagonist of the story, the Misfit, which doesn't seem to be a very good thing. The grandmother recognized him, and he said, "but it would have been better for all of you, lady, if you hadn't of reckernized me," (O'Connor) her son Bailey doesn't like what he is hearing and says something to his mom that Misfit didn't like. The grandmother keeps telling Misfit things like, "… you shouldn't call yourself

The Misfit because I know you're a good man at heart. I can just look at you and tell … I know you're a good man. You don't look a bit like you have common blood. I know you must come from nice people." (O'Connor). He then starts to agree with her and says that he is good. Everything eventually goes downhill he kills everyone. At the end of the story, he says, "She would of been a good woman … if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life" (O'Connor). It is very ironic that the misfit thinks he knows what makes a person good when he just shot a whole family in cold blood. There is that word good again it is being used in the same way it was used in, "Good People," to describe someone. Misfit was not a good man and the grandmother knew, she just said those things to lead him on, but the grandmother was no a good person either. One difference I did notice is that "Good People," was more spiritually based rather than just overall good.

The last story we have left is, "Good Country People," which follows Hulga Hopewell (originally known as Joy Hopewell) and the people in her town. Hulga has been missing her leg since she was 10, she has a Ph.D. in philosophy. Hulga is known to have grown ruder and meaner as the years went on. We first see good being used when describing the Freemans, Mrs. Hopewell calls them, "good country people." Hulga didn't like these country people and would've stayed to study more if she could but already had her Ph.D. We then meet the bible salesman, Manley Pointer, he tries to sell a bible to Mrs. Hopewell but she tell him Hulga is an atheist and that she has on her nightstand, but he shoots her with the, "for a Christian, the word of God ought to be in every room in the house besides in his heart. I know you're a Christian because I can see it in every line of your face." (O'Connor). Mrs. Hopewell still does not want a bible, so Manley says that of course she doesn't because people like her don't mess with people like him to which she says, "good country people are the salt of the earth! Besides, we all have different ways of doing, it takes all kinds to make the world go ?round. That's life" (O'Connor). Later Manley and Hulga get kind of close and we find out Manley is a poser, after Hulga says, "You're a Christian … You're a fine Christian! You're just like them all – say one thing and do another. You're a perfect Christian, you're...," (O'Connor) which he responds with, "I hope you don't think," he … that I believe in that crap! I may sell Bibles, but I know which end is up and I wasn't born yesterday, and I know where I'm going" (O'Connor). Hulga had all this education but still got outsmarted, which was a shame and Manley called her out on it. It's very ironic that Manley sells bibles for a living and claims he is a good country Christian but carries a hollowed bible with a flask in and blatantly told Hulga he doesn't actually believe and lies and swindles dozens of people.

In conclusion, these three stories all have something to add to the word good. "Good Country People," is similar to the two other stories in the way good is being used to describe someone and their actions. It is similar to, "Good People," because it also involves people and their struggle with faith. It is similar to, "A Good Man is Hard to Find," because it involves an antagonist who harms others and pretends to be good to get their way. "Good People," is the one with the most difference because it's a more realistic situation and probably something most people struggle with. Like I said in the beginning good is a subjective term, you are either here or there but never both.