Analysis Questions for “Young Goodman Brown”

First, you need to look up the literary term ***allegory***. Give its meaning and any other information that you deem necessary. You may find that you have to use your own paper here…I may not have left enough room for all the questions…

1. In the beginning, how does the setting / imagery / mood of the story affect you? Does it give us any inclination to what kind of journey Goodman Brown will be taking?
2. What do you feel is the significance of “Faith kept me back a while.”?
3. When the fellow traveler states, “I have been well acquainted with your family..I helped you grandfather, the constable, when he lashed the Quaker woman so smartly through the streets of Salem….The deacons of many a church have drunk wine with me; the select men of divers town make me their chariman; and a majority of the Great and General Court are firm believers of my interest,” what do we begin to understand about him? Through this character, what is Hawthorne telling us about evil?
4. After Goodman Brown refuses to go any further, the traveller thowsn him the maple stick and leaves. Discuss Googman Brown’s attitude and conscience.
5. What does the black mass of cloud symbolize – the confused and doubtful sound of voices?
6. Describe what Goodman Brown saw when he arrived at the meeting – the grave, reputable, and pious people, the chaste dames and dewy virgins, the revered pastor, and that the good “shrank not from the wicked.” Discuss the meaning of this…
7. Consider the following interpretations. Supply examples of specific textual evidence supporting each interpretation. Then compose a thoutful, cogent thesis statement for each interpretation.
   1. “Young Goodman Brown” is an inward psychological journey where Goodman Brown discovers evel in himself but refuses to acknowledge it.
   2. “Young Goodman Brown” is a coming of age story about a young man who desires to abandon his faith to have one last “fling,” to “taste the forbidden fruit,” before settling into a strict Puritan life.
   3. Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote “Young Goodman Brown” to expose and denounce Puritan attitudes and hypocrisy.

8. “Young Goodman Brown” is a moral ***allegory*** (which you should have looked up earlier). Hint…has to do with a story with dual meanings…a literal meaning and a secondary meaning that works outside of the text. Discuss the moral lesson(s) that you discover in the story.