

Sample argumentative essay on young goodman brown and how his faith was tested

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Test of Faith in Young Goodman Brown

In the short story "Young Goodman Brown," the author Nathaniel Hawthorne makes use of mystery and suspense in order to grasp the readers' attention. This story is apparently a parable, bursting as it is filled with symbolism of the obscurity within the hearts of common people. The predominant message that Hawthorne intends to deliver through the story is about the powerlessness of the human race, and in order to convey the same, the author has used numerous literary techniques in an entertaining manner to the readers. The story seem to be predominantly dealing with supernatural forces as the antagonist of the story is a devil and hence makes the story to be far from naturalist ideas. "The generic names in Hawthorne's tale and the biblically allusive nature of the temptations Goodman are subjected to seem sufficient proof of Hawthorne's allegorical intent (Paulits)."

Right from the beginning of the story till its end, Hawthorne leads the reader to the question, "what does all of this witchcraft, mysticism, and the double-sided lifestyles of the characters actually mean?" To answer this question, it is necessary that the reader looks at the character of Goodman Brown and the entire story as just an enthralling story while also considering the numerous forms of allegory used by the author. Hawthorne demonstrates that a strong faith is the biggest asset for human beings, and when the same is compromised, the consequences of the same can result in the individual being filled with a persisting uncertainty and pessimism toward whole of the remaining world.

Goodman Brown does demonstrate his strong faith before he ventures into

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the woods and he does so quite often during his journey in the forest to the black mass. Hawthorne gives Goodman Brown's wife the very name as Faith, and uses this as a symbol of Brown's own faith all through the entire story. The strong faith of Goodman Brown is evident from the very initial description of his wife Faith - " And Faith, as the wife was aptly named, thrust her own pretty head into the street, letting the wind play with the pink ribbons of her cap (140)."

The story ' Goodman Brown is aimed at conveying about the importance of belief in one's self. This fact is emphasized by the author by yet another aspect in the story – to name the wife of the protagonist Brown's wife as Faith. All of the references made by Brown to his wife Faith and his efforts to draw might from her place in his life depict the author's pressure on the significance of faith in the fight against the inner darkness of one's self. Noticeably the pinnacle of Brown's spiritual torment is a visualization of offense in his wife Faith. Manifestation suggests that distrust of Faith is also the beginning of that torment (Paultis)". Hawthorne advocates that Goodman Brown's wife Faith is untainted and guiltless, akin to the own faith of Goodman Brown. Besides, the reassuring replies that Brown gives his wife Faith suggest that his faith is something that cannot be debilitated or enfeebled.

Even though Goodman Brown was conscious about the fact that he is about to contribute to an evil act, his belief in his faith is believed to bring him back home safely and unblemished. He also expresses the belief he has in his faith while he ventures through the woods at a point where the dark figure appeals Goodman Brown to come along with him. The " purpose" and "

scruples" of Goodman Brown denote his good faith. After the dark figure articulates regarding all of the evil acts performed by Goodman Brown, he exclaims, "there is my wife, Faith. It would break her dear little heart: and I'd rather break my own (142)."

Hawthorne uses the name Faith yet another time to symbolize the faith of Goodman Brown, and he allows the reader to believe that Goodman Brown would rather die than give up his faith. When Brown sees both the town minister and Deacon Gookin racing towards the black mass, he once again shows his faith is strong when he cries, "With Heaven above, and Faith below, I will yet stand firm against the devil (144)." Hawthorne makes use of just the enormousness of the journey of Goodman Brown through the woods and the black mass as a symbol of all the sin and evil that is persistently present all over the world. Goodman Brown apparently seems to have faith in his own individual ethical values. However, he seems to have lost his faith in all the remains of the world and also the moral values that others in this world have.

This lack of faith of Goodman Brown in the world has transformed him into being intolerant as he believes only malevolence can be effected from evil and there does not exist anything in the world that might help in changing this very phenomena. Instead of looking at the good in people and considering all their rightful actions and pardoning their sins, Goodman Brown only scowls upon them and he is also of the strong belief that all people in the world are hypocrites except him.

Actually, it is Goodman Brown who is the pretender. This is due to the fact that he is of the strong belief that he can pass judgment on all the people

who commit sins, yet he fails to recognize his own sins. The point that Hawthorne endeavours to prove through this account is that all people are sinners, and it is not right to hate people for their sins but it is rather appropriate to hate the sins instead of the sinners and also love them. Goodman Brown's loss of faith has blinded him from seeing this. His sin of pride is finally replicated in the very society for which he stands as an esteemed representative. Goodman Brown might have been the author's expression of his own effort and fight with his faith in humankind and his own self. Hawthorne was a remorse ridden person and it seems that he had a lot of instances when his trust and belief were tested. Brown can be looked up as the author himself to a little extent.

At the beginning of the story, Goodman Brown starts his journey as an excellent, contented, respectable man and he seems to be very satisfied. All of these qualities of Brown change when he decides not in favour of the advice of his wife Faith which is an obvious symbolism in its name, that he should set out on a journey into the forest to attend a meeting with the devil. As he continues to walk down the forest he arrives at the height of his journey when he finally comes upon the meeting with the witches. The loss of optimism, contributions, and faith of Goodman Brown as well as and the pessimism of his demise foretells the same in the Puritan culture.

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