

Religious experience for the existence of god



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Expect different forms of the argument from religious experience, e. g. inductive argument, direct awareness, cumulative argument. Also expect reference to Swinburne's principle of credulity and principle of testimony. Maximum Level 2 if summary of types of religious experience with no reference to argument for God. for one fully developed argument, or two that are less developed. 30 marks) AO1 Religious experience can be argued to prove the existence of God, for example the inductive argument could argue for the existence of God as if something is experienced then it must exist and as people claim to experience God, therefore God probably exists. * A) If an entity is experienced, it must exist b)

God can be experienced or encountered directly c) people claim to experienced and encountered God directly d) therefore God exists * Richard Swinburne (wrote *Is there a God?* n 1996) says that it is reasonable that God would seek to interact with his creatures and he gives us a list of examples, such as God telling us individually to provide us with a vocation or to authenticate a revelation which we need. God loves us and so may simply show himself to particular individuals. However many may regard other explanations as more probable. Principle of credulity- unless we have overwhelming evidence to the contrary we should believe that things are what they seem to be.

Swinburne also argues for the principle of testimony- we should work on the assumption that people tell the truth. * Inductive argument: if an entity is experienced then it must exist, people claim they experience God- therefore God probably exists * Cumulative argument: most of the arguments for God's existence work together so suggest that God does not exist as each

argument itself is not proof on its own but when together, become more convincing. Swinburne.

E. g. cosmological and ontological ' our total evidence is more probable than not' * More likely to belief something if personally experienced * Direct awareness: Direct awareness arguments suggest that God is a being that can be directly perceived by humans and there are lots of examples of people who seem to just know that the being they are communicating with is God and that their awareness of God is direct and not based upon reason or thought. Deductive argument: a conclusion is drawn from general statements and there is often alternate interpretations * Edwards: ' experience of God is the best evidence we have that he exists' * The argument from religious experience depends on accepting that when someone claims that they have had a religious experience it was a) a genuine experience and b) from God