**The nature of religious experience**

**a)** Context of religious experience across religious traditions, range of definitions related to belief in God and/or ultimate reality, theistic and monistic views, ineffability, noetic, transience, passivity.

**b)** Types: conversion, prayer, meditation, mysticism, numinous.

Relationship between religious experience and propositional and non-propositional revelation.

**c)** Alternative explanations, physiological and naturalistic, interpretations, objectivist and subjectivist views.

With reference to the ideas of W James and R Otto.

**Influence of religious experience as an argument for the existence**

**of God**

**a)** Inductive reasoning based on evidence, the link between appearances, how things seem, how things really are and conclusions drawn from experience about reality and existence. Principles of testimony and credulity, the value and role of testimony to religious experience.

With reference to the ideas of R Swinburne and J Hick.

**b)** Strengths and weaknesses of religious experience as an argument for the existence of God: experiences influenced by the religious context of the believer, religious experiences interpreted as any other sensory experiences, complexity of interpretations, issues of probability and proof as relating to the argument, nature of God, including transcendent and immanent, limitations of language, lack of uniformity of experiences, refinements of and challenges to the argument.

With reference to the ideas of M Persinger and R Dawkins