

Alston's argument

- i. Alston's belief that his dog is wagging its tail is epistemically justified because it looks to Alston like his dog is wagging his tail (and there are no defeaters).
 - a. Similarly, your belief that your classmate's eyes are brown was epistemically justified because it looked to you like her eyes were brown (and there were no defeaters).
 - b. What makes Alston's belief that his dog is wagging his tail epistemically justified is his experience that his dog is wagging its tail.
- ii. Thus, if a person has an experience with propositional content p , then they are epistemically justified in believing that p is true (unless that justification is defeated).
- iii. Alston has experiences with propositional content about God (e.g. "God is present and sustaining me.").
- iv. There is no epistemically relevant difference between these experiences and other types of "ordinary" experiences.
- v. Thus, Alston has epistemically justified beliefs about God (unless that justification is defeated).

1. Is Alston claiming that every religious belief is automatically epistemically justified?

2. Consider the following claim: “For any particular type of experience, before we can justifiably believe what it experience tells us, we have to know that that type of experience reliably tells us the truth.”

Does this claim seem plausible for “normal” types of experiences (vision, etc)? Why or why not?

Two ways religious experience can diverge

- Some people have religious experiences, some people do not.
- Some people have religious experiences that say *p is true* and some people have religious experiences that say *p is not true*.

1. Think of a plausible (uncontroversial) counterexample to the following claim:

If person A experiences that *p is true* and person B has no experience about *p*, then A is not justified in believing that *p is true*.

2. Is the following claim true? Why or why not?

If person A experiences that *p is true*, and tells person B, and person B has no experience about *p*, then B is justified in believing that *p is true* and B is not justified in believing that *p is not true*.