

Chapter Fifteen

Steps Toward a Personal Christian Apologetic

Step 1: I exist.

How do I know this?

(1) I know it by *intuition* (direct knowledge) as a primary datum of consciousness.

(2) I know it by *reasoning*, via some form of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*. Whether I reason "I think, therefore I am," or "I question, therefore I am," or "I doubt...," or "I wonder...," or "I don't know...," or "I deny...," or "I despair...," the conclusion is the same: "therefore I am." In all of these reasonings, there is an awareness, a consciousness of a being that is doing the thinking, questioning, etc. And this awareness is reflexive, i.e., it is a self-awareness. The being doing the thinking is aware that it *itself* is doing the thinking, doubting, or denying.

(3) I know it *empirically*, via sensory experience of myself and of my ability to experience the physical world around me.

(4) I know it by *authority*, on the basis of the affirmations of my parents, other persons, and official records (birth, medical, school, employment, military, voting, financial, church, government). These affirmations and official records assure me that I exist!

Step 2: How do I know that I am not merely dreaming or imagining that I exist?

(1) I know it by *reasoning*, via the dictum *I dream, therefore I am*. If I dream or hallucinate, then I must exist to do the dreaming or hallucinating.

(2) I know it *empirically*, via sensory experience of the *contrast* between waking and dream states, and of the contrast between the real world and the world of fantasy.