I. Know the Plan - 2 Peter 3:16-18: God-Consciousness

This entire process is dependent upon the self-motivation of the believer to utilize the assets supplied to him in grace:

1. The imputation of logistical grace for the sustenance of physical life. 2 Peter 1:3
2. The imputation of logistical grace for the sustenance of spiritual life. 2 Peter 1:3
3. Utilization of the Grace Apparatus for Perception within the boundaries of the filling of the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 3:18
4. Volitional response to gnosis within the boundaries of academic understanding supplied by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 3:18
5. Availability of *epignosis* knowledge in the stream of consciousness resulting in multiplied tranquility of the soul. 2 Peter 1:2

Consequently, there can be no spiritual advance without self-motivation and you cannot execute your self- motivation if you do not understand the mechanics of spiritual growth.

If a person manages to acquire divine truth in his stream of consciousness, it is the result of self- motivation beginning at the point of God-consciousness.

God-consciousness is the recognition of the existence of a Supreme Being. This realization is arrived at in a number of ways. And by the way, each method is accomplished by means of rationalism, empiricism, or a combination of the two.

a. **Religious**. God must exist because man universally believes in His existence.

> **Acts 17:26** - He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation,
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> **Acts 17:27** - that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.

b. **Moral**. Every person has a volition and a conscience and the ability to distinguish right from wrong. A material, ungoverned universe can know nothing of moral values apart from the absolute righteousness of a Supreme Being.

> **Romans 2:14** - When the Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,
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> **Romans 2:15** - in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them **[establishment morality]**.

c. **Ontological**. Since the human mind possesses the idea of a perfect and absolute Being, such a Being must exist. Beyond the relative there is the Absolute which gives value to the relative.

> **Psalm 19:7** - The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

d. **Teleological**. The structure and order found in the universe, both microscopic and telescopic, demands a Designer. Both phenomena display order, design, arrangement, and purpose behind which there must be a Master Planner. This is the case whether you observe the structure of an atom or the configuration of the galaxies; the encoding of the DNA molecule or the intricate traffic patterns of the heavenly bodies.

Romans 1:20 - Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they **[unbelievers]** are without excuse.

e. **Cosmological**. The intuitive law of cause and effect demands the existence of God. This process ultimately must work its way back to a First Cause. The universe—made up of non-intelligent matter—cannot be its own cause.

Psalm 148:3 - Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all stars of light!

Psalm 148:4 - Praise Him, highest heavens, and the waters that are above the heavens!

Psalm 148:5 - Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He commanded **[First Cause]** and they were created **[*ex nihilo* effect]**.

I'd like to illustrate the Teleological and the Cosmological approaches by reading an excerpt from a book by:

Davis, Percival, and Kenyon, Dean H. "The Origin of Life." In of Pandas and People. Dallas: Haughton Publishing Company, 1989, pp. 5-7 passim:

The Language of Life

Though life is made of simple chemicals, we should not conclude that living things are themselves simple. Shakespeare's sonnets are artistically complex, though they are composed of simple letters made to form words and phrases. Mozart's pieces are musically complex, though they consist of simple notes placed in patterns. The decisive factor in living things is not the simple components but the patterns.

What patterns are essential to life? Most scientists define life in terms of the coded information in the DNA. It is this information that governs the development and functioning of all the cells in our bodies.

The origin of life, then, is the origin of coded information. The large molecules crucial to life, such as protein and DNA, are constructed much like a message in a known language, with chemicals acting as letters and combining to form words, phrases, and sentences. The "message" is decoded by the cell much the same way the dots and dashes of Morse Code can be decoded by anyone who knows it.

In the world around us, we see two kinds of things: natural objects, like stars and mountains, and man-made structures, like houses and computers. To put it in the context of origins, we see things resulting from two kinds of causes: natural and intelligent.

Uniform Experience

How do we decide whether something is the result of natural or intelligent causes? Most of us do it without even thinking. We see clouds and we know, based on our experience, they are the result of natural causes. No matter how intricate the shapes may be, we know that a cloud is simply water vapor shaped by the wind and the temperature. On the other hand, we may see something very much like a cloud that spell out the words "Vote for Smedley." We know that even though they are white and fluffy like clouds, the words cannot be the result of natural causes. Why not? Because our experience tells us that natural causes do not give rise to complex structures such as a linguistic message.

When we find "John loves Mary" written in the sand, we assume it resulted from an intelligent cause. Experience is the basis for science as well. When we find a complex message coded into the nucleus of a cell, it is reasonable to draw the same conclusion. Science uses controlled experiments to determine what sort of results occur under given conditions. The results we observe to occur consistently and regularly are the basis of the laws we formulate.

In other words, when scientists first probed the nucleus of the cell, they stumbled upon a phenomenon akin to finding "John loves Mary" written in the sand, or "Vote for Smedley" written in the sky. The greatest difference is that the DNA text is much more complex. If the amount of information contained in one cell of your body were written out on a typewriter, it would fill as many books as are contained in a large library.

Are natural causes capable of producing these kinds of patterns? To say that DNA and protein arose by natural causes, as evolution does, is to say complex, coded messages arose by natural causes. It is akin to saying "John loves Mary" arose from the action of the waves, or from the interaction of the grains of sand. It is like saying the painting of a sunset arose from the atoms in the paint and canvas. When in our experience have we ever witnessed such an event?

Whenever we see meaningful symbols we assume it is the handiwork of some intelligent cause. We make that assumption even if we cannot decipher the symbols, as when an archaeologist discovers some ancient inscription on stone. If science is based upon experience, then science tells us the message encoded in DNA must have originated from an intelligent cause.

What kind of intelligent agent was it? On its own, science cannot answer this question; it must leave it to religion and philosophy. But that should not prevent science from acknowledging evidences for an intelligent cause origin wherever they may exist.

Entropy: In a closed system, a measure of the randomness, disorder, or chaos. From the Greek entrope: "to change; to turn around."

Morris, Harry M. The Genesis Record. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976, pp. 124-128 passim.