THE OLD PRINCETON APOLOGETICS:
COMMON SENSE OR REFORMED?

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At its founding, Princeton Theological Seminary was given the specific apologetical task of equipping its students to combat the deistic errors of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. This played a significant role in the development of its apologetics, as it tended to take over the argumentation of previous apologists who had attempted the same task, without regard to whether they were Reformed or not. Thus, Bishop Butler's eighteenth-century work, *The Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed*, became a standard reference work for apologetics classes, in spite of the fact that Butler had repudiated his strict Calvinistic Presbyterian upbringing to embrace a moderate Anglicanism.[1]

While apologetics was a significant concern, it was certainly not the sole focus of the major Princetonian theologians. Archibald Alexander, the founding professor of Princeton, taught both didactic and polemical theology. Charles Hodge began his academic career as an exegete of Scripture, and later moved to systematic theology, for which he is better known.[2] His son Archibald Alexander Hodge replaced him in the chair of didactic and polemic theology, and he in turn was replaced by Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. None of these noted professors served explicitly in the chair of apologetics, which was only created in the later part of the nineteenth century. However, Warfield, a prolific writer, frequently addressed apologetical themes in his writings. A later, lesser known Princetonian, William Brenton Greene, Jr., occupied the Stuart Professorship of Apologetics and Christian Ethics from

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[1] The "Plan of the Theological Seminary" stated as part of its goals for every student, "He must have read and digested the principal arguments and writings relative to what has been called the deistical controversy.—Thus he will be qualified to become a defender of the Christ faith" (quoted in Mark Noll, ed., *The Princeton Theology 1812–1921: Scripture, Science and Theological Method from Archibald Alexander to Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983] 57). Butler's argument had several notable characteristics. First, he began with a natural theology and then later added revelation to it; second, he appealed to reason as the judge of revelation (implying that reason is competent and "neutral" is such judging); and thirdly, he built a "probabilistic" argument. See Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed*, Everyman's Library (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1906).

[2] In addition to his famous three-volume *Systematic Theology*, Hodge published several commentaries on Scripture, including one on Romans, which continues to be in print. Warfield, like Hodge, began his career as a teacher in NT.

1892 until his death in 1928.[3] He thus taught as a contemporary of Benjamin B. Warfield, during the last decades of "Old Princeton." As the professor in apologetics of that era, Greene warrants careful consideration. In order to better understand his apologetics, attention must first be paid to what is meant by "Old Princeton," and then to the background philosophy of Scottish Common Sense Realism, before turning to an exposition and evaluation of his apologetics. It will be shown that his apologetics betray an inner tension, even inconsistency, between a Calvinist Reformed approach and one engendered by Scottish philosophy.

I. "OLD PRINCETON"

In order to understand the context of the apologetics of William Brenton Greene, Jr., it is first necessary to define "Old Princeton." This term refers to the consistent theological approach used at Princeton Theological Seminary from its founding in 1812 until the death of its last great exponent, Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, in 1921.[4] Several distinctives marked Old Princeton. First, it held a high view of Scripture and was unwavering in its commitment to its authority. This had been true of the Reformed tradition since the Reformation, and was the common, almost universal, position in antebellum American Christianity. Secondly, it was self-consciously confessionally Reformed, with a strict adherence to the seventeenth-century Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.[5] This was in marked contrast to the American culture of the day, which was moving away from confessionalism to broad evangelicalism, even to the point of anti-confessionalism.

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[3] Prior to 1903 the position was known as the "Stuart Professorship of the Relations of Philosophy and Science to the Christian Religion in Princeton Theological Seminary."

[4] The end date could also be given as 1929, when J. Gresham Machen, a strong defender of the Old Princeton theology, left Princeton Theological Seminary to found Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. However, the 1920s witnessed an increasing division within the Princeton community between the conservative Calvinists, led by Machen, and the moderate evangelicals, led by President J. Ross Stevenson and Professor Charles Erdman. This division had roots in the previous decades, but only erupted into open conflict after Warfield's retirement, and resulted in the victory of the moderates with the reorganization of the board in 1929. While doctrinally the two camps were close (Erdman himself had contributed to *The Fundamentals* some years earlier), their approach to doctrine was much different.

The following analysis is heavily indebted to Mark Noll, who writes of the Old Princeton theology in the following essays: "The Founding of Princeton Seminary," *WTJ* 42 (1979) 72–110; Introduction to *The Princeton Theology, 1812–1921*; "Common Sense Traditions and American Evangelical Thought," *American Quarterly* 37 (1985) 216–38; "The Spirit of Old Princeton and the Spirit of the OPC," in *Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* (ed. Charles G. Dennison and Richard C. Gamble; Philadelphia: The Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1986); Introduction to *Charles Hodge: The Way of Life* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1987).

[5] These standards, the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), the Larger Catechism (1648), and the Shorter Catechism (1647), had been drawn up by an assembly of theologians appointed by the English Parliament in 1643. They were subsequently adopted by the Church of Scotland, and thus by English speaking Presbyterian bodies around the world, including the American colonies in 1729 (and reaffirmed in the new nation, the United States of America, in 1789).

Thirdly, Old Princeton stood staunchly for "Old School" Presbyterianism, and opposed the "New School," in both the separation of 1837 and in the reunion of 1869.[6] This involved the Princetonians in the thick of the denominational battles of the day, which was made more pointed by the fact that Princeton Theological Seminary itself was under the direct control of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.[7] This situation was in contrast to the numerous other Presbyterian seminaries, which operated under independent, self-perpetuating boards. Fourthly, it accepted Scottish Common Sense Realism as the philosophical basis on which to develop epistemology and apologetics.

What does "acceptance" mean? This point has been clearly noted and argued by numerous scholars since Sydney Ahlstrom's seminal article, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology." Some, such as John Vander Stelt and Nancey Murphy attribute the Princetonians' general theological positions to their acceptance of Common Sense Realism. Mark Noll and Paul Helseth, while not denying its presence, provide arguments against an overemphasis on the influence of the Scottish philosophy.[8] Helseth, for example,

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[6] In 1837 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, under the control of the Old School, revoked the Plan of Union with the Congregationalists for working in frontier areas, and in effect excluded the New School, who then formed their own assembly. Reunion was later achieved in 1869 after several years of discussion. The Old School Presbyterians upheld the traditional emphasis on right doctrine and strict confessionalism, while the New School tended to practice doctrinal tolerance in the interest of revivalistic evangelism and broad evangelical cooperation. See George M. Marsden, "The New School Heritage and Presbyterian Fundamentalism," *WTJ* 32 (1970) 129–47. However, Eric Bristley, in "From Probability to Certainty: The Witness of the Holy Spirit and the Defense of the Bible in Presbyterian and Reformed Apologetics, 1870–1920" (Th.M. thesis, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1989) 7–9, points out that the founders of Princeton University and later of Princeton Theological Seminary had their roots in the revivals of the Great Awakening, but the founders of the seminary were at the same time strong supporters of the nineteenth century Old School Presbyterianism. Thus Old Princeton was not "anti-revival" *per se*, but rather against sensationalism and revivalistic anthropologies such as that of ex-Presbyterian Charles Finney.

[7] This meant that the General Assembly appointed the board, and confirmed professorial appointments at Princeton. This became very significant in the battle over the restructuring of the board in 1929, which had been precipitated by Machen's never-confirmed appointment to the apologetics chair in 1926 (he had been serving in the area of NT until that time). See D. G. Hart, *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism in Modern America* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), especially the chapter on "A Question of Character."

[8] See Sydney Ahlstrom, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology," *Church History* 24 (1955) 257–72; Nancey Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996); John Vander Stelt in *Philosophy and Scripture: A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology* (Marlton, NJ: Mack, 1978); Paul Helseth, "Moral Character and Moral Certainty: The Subjective State of the Soul and J. G. Machen's Critique of Theological Liberalism" (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 1996); "The Apologetical Tradition of the OPC: A Reconsideration," *WTJ* 60 (1998) 109–29; "B. B. Warfield's Apologetical Appeal to 'Right Reason'" Evidence of a 'Rather Bald Rationalism'? *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 16 (1998) 156–77; "'Right Reason' and the Princeton Mind: The Moral Context," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 77 (1999) 13–28; "B. B. Warfield on the Apologetic Nature of Christian Scholarship: An Analysis of His Solution to the Problem of the Relationship Between Christianity and Culture," *WTJ* 62 (2000) 89–111; and "'*Re*-imagining' the Princeton Mind: Postconservative Evangelicalism, Old Princeton, and the Rise of Neo-Fundamentalism," *JETS* 45 (September 2002) 427–50. George

argues that while common sense realism provided the "framework" for the Old Princetonians, they were not rationalists, because they clearly recognized the subjective aspect of epistemology, and saw the soul acting as a unitary subject.[9] The use of common language and argumentation make it clear that the Old Princetonians were influenced to some degree by the Scottish philosophy.

In fact, the impact of Common Sense Realism is much more readily apparent in the theology of antebellum Unitarianism and the New Haven Theology, and especially in the anthropology of Charles Finney at Oberlin, who taught human ability to respond to the gospel, apart from any special work of the Holy Spirit. The acceptance, in some sense, of Scottish Common Sense Realism by the Old Princetonians would have been in general agreement with the American culture of the day, although Princeton lingered in its adherence late in the nineteenth century when American intellectual currents were moving in different directions.

If one is to argue that the philosophy of Scottish Common Sense Realism directly influenced the Old Princeton apologetics, it is necessary first to establish what that philosophy taught, and then to consider at what points it is apparent in the apologetics.

II. THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCOTTISH COMMON SENSE REALISM

Scottish Common Sense Realism largely arose as a reaction to Hume's scepticism. The first, and greatest, proponent of this approach was Thomas Reid (1710–1796).[10] His views were transplanted to the colonies by John Witherspoon in 1768, when Witherspoon assumed the presidency of the College of New Jersey in Princeton. The influence of this philosophy at that institution would continue through the presidency of its last great exponent, the Scotsman James McCosh (1811–1894). Through the influence of the college, the common sense philosophy also predominated at Princeton Theological Seminary. However, it also should be noted that this philosophy became dominant in all sectors of antebellum American life, and even continues to be influential in many ways to the present.[11]

Scottish Common Sense Realism had several distinguishing characteristics. It stressed the importance of induction, in keeping with its desire to be

Marsden provides a sympathetic critique of Vander Stelt that suggests a mediating position in the debate ("Scotland and Philadelphia: Common Sense Philosophy from Jefferson to Westminster," *The Reformed Journal* [March 1979] 8–12.)

   [9] See Helseth, " 'Right Reason' and the Princeton Mind: The Moral Context" 17–21, for an argument that concedes the presence of Common Sense Realism in Old Princeton, but defends the overriding influence of subjective and experiential concerns in its religious epistemology.

   [10] The best one-volume summary remains S. A. Grave, *The Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960). The question of the originator of this movement is debated, but Reid clearly was the foremost proponent, and the first with whom a definite "school" was associated.

   [11] Ahlstrom's article, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology," still provides a useful introduction. See also Mark Ellingsen, "Common Sense Realism: The Cutting Edge of Evangelical Identity," *Dialog* 24 (1985) 197–205, for comments about its continuing influence.

"scientific," to bring order to "mental philosophy" in the way that Bacon and Newton had brought order to "natural philosophy."[12] It rejected the theory of "ideas" which interposed between the knowing subject and the object known.[13] It sought to found its reasoning upon self-evident first principles, for both necessary and contingent truths. It regarded "common sense" as having authority, because it had metaphysical significance from the constitution of human reason.

"Common Sense" is a somewhat slippery term, inasmuch as it possesses several possible meanings, according to the context. Common use of the term refers to one who has average intelligence or practical wisdom, or that it is the universal belief or persuasion of ordinary people.[14] Reid obviously meant more than this in most places. He gave this term to the human faculty that deals with first principles, by which he meant self-evident principles. For example, he wrote, "If there are certain principles, as I think there are, which the constitution of our nature leads us to believe, and which we are under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life, without being able to give a reason for them; these are what we call the principles of common sense; and what is manifestly contrary to them, is what we call absurd."[15] Reid was not the first to make use of the term in his philosophy.

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[12] Reid referred to Bacon approvingly at numerous points. For example, in his discussion of the causes of error he followed Bacon's analysis. See Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (ed. A. D. Woozley; London: Macmillan, 1941), "Essay VI: Of Judgment; Chapter 8: Of Prejudices, the Causes of Error" 408–19. Reid listed induction as one of the first principles of contingent truth. His fullest discussion concerning induction can be found in his *An Inquiry into the Human Mind* (ed. Timothy Duggan; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), in part VI, "Of Seeing," section xxiv, "Of the Analogy between Perception, and the Credit We Give to Human Testimony" 242–51. Bacon and Newton became the heroes for nineteenth-century American thought. This emphasis on induction and science is well documented by Theodore Dwight Bozeman, in *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1977). Bozeman especially focused on the Presbyterian Old School (among whom were the Princetonians) emphasis on induction, and the distinction between "facts" and "reasoning."

[13] Thus we truly, if only partially, know reality. While there are some similarities with Kant's response to Humean scepticism, this is a major difference. Reid clearly would reject the notion that reality ultimately resides in an unknown *Ding an sich*.

[14] A cursory reading, especially of some popular accounts, could lead one to believe that the "philosophy of common sense" was merely a defense of the prejudices of the masses against the learned. While there are numerous instances of such polemics, especially in later writers, such a reading would be a gross over-simplification of this philosophy. This tendency may explain, however, the great popularity of the philosophy in nineteenth-century America, with its ethic of equality and democratization.

[15] Thomas Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*, II.vi (p. 32). Reid made another statement along these lines in a discussion of Berkeley and Hume: "Such an anecdote may not be uninstructive if it prove a warning to philosophers to beware of hypotheses, especially when they lead to conclusions which contradict the principles upon which all men of common sense must act in common life." Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, II.12 (p. 132). Reid wrote concerning the self-evident nature of his basic principles, "All knowledge and all science must be built upon principles that are self-evident, and of such principles every man who has common sense is a competent judge when he conceives them distinctly. Hence it is that disputes very often terminate in an appeal to common sense" (*Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, VI.2, 331). One major problem later writers have had with Reid is his failure to carefully delineate was constitutes "self-evidence."

Berkeley, the British idealist, had himself claimed to be defending common sense against the philosophers![16] "Common Sense" was also used by Reid and his followers as synonymous with reasoning, especially in its inductive function.[17]

Reid argued that there are numerous self-evident "first principles" which, themselves being unprovable, are the basis for all other thought and knowledge. He distinguished between the first principles of necessary and contingent truths. The former were largely restricted to grammatical, logical, and mathematical issues, but also included some basic beliefs of taste and morals, as well as some "metaphysical" principles. In the last category Reid included such items as causality, the existence of minds and bodies, and the "major premise" for the argument from design.[18] The first principles of contingent truth, on the other hand, dealt with knowledge we gain through our senses. These included such things as the reliability of memory, personal identity, and the existence of other living, thinking humans. None of these could be proved, and in fact, many had been questioned by philosophers; but no one could fail to act upon such beliefs.[19] For Reid, the nature of belief differs between necessary truths and contingent truths. The former could be demonstrated from the appropriate "first principles" or axioms, and were therefore certain; but the latter could only be "probable," which probability could vary widely from slight to extremely high. The difference lay in the different kinds of evidence which underlay the judgment of truth. Reid considered all knowledge to be belief based on evidence.[20] Evidence could be of various

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Obviously, self-evident principles cannot be proven. Grave observes, "Reid has no answer to the question, 'How do we know that they are true?' except that it is a question that cannot be asked if it is ever to be answered; all evidence must terminate in self-evidence, and these beliefs are self-evident. Alternatively, they are forced upon us by 'the constitution of our nature.' And no belief can have a more unanswerable authority. Sir James Mackintosh remarks that he observed to Dr. Brown in 1812 that Reid and Hume 'differed more in words than in opinion.' Brown answered: 'Yes, Reid bawled out, We must believe an outward world; but added in a whisper, We can give no reason for our belief. Hume cries out, We can give no reason for such a notion; and whispers, I own we cannot get rid of it'" (Grave, *Scottish Philosophy* 108–9).

[16] Early in his career Reid had been an avid follower of Berkeley.

[17] For example, Reid wrote, "We ascribe to reason two offices or two degrees. The first is to judge of things self-evident; the second to draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are. The first of these is the province, and the sole province, of common sense, and, therefore, it coincides with reason in its whole extent and is only another name for one branch or one degree of reason" (*Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, VI.2, 339).

[18] See Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, VI.6, 391–408. Reid wrote, "The *last* metaphysical principle I mention, which is opposed by the same author [Hume], is, That design and intelligence in the cause may be inferred, with certainty, from marks or signs of it in the effect" (402).

[19] Ibid. VI.5 (372–91). He concluded this chapter by saying, "I do not at all affirm that those I have mentioned are all the first principles from which we may reason concerning contingent truths. Such enumerations, even when made after much reflection, are seldom perfect" (391).

[20] For example, Reid wrote, "Belief, assent, conviction, are words which I do not think admit of logical definition, because the operation of the mind signified by them is perfectly simple and of its own kind. Nor do they need to be defined, because they are common words and well understood.

  Belief must have an object. . . .

  Belief is always expressed in language by a proposition, wherein something is affirmed or denied This is the form of speech which in all language is appropriated to that purpose, and

types, such as sense, memory, consciousness, testimony, axioms, and reasoning. He disclaimed any underlying unity to the different types, except, "They seem to me to agree only in this, that they are all fitted by nature to produce belief in the human mind, some of them in the highest degree, which we call certainty, others in various degrees according to circumstances."[21] Reid made final recourse at numerous places to "nature" or God as the final guarantor of the "first principles," of the adequacy and accuracy of the human mind to gain knowledge. Thus, while by the nature of the case the self-evident first principles cannot be proved, they can be relied upon as trustworthy.[22]

Reid was a contemporary of Bishop Butler, and knew and approved of the latter's *Analogy*. There are similarities in their treatment of evidence for contingent truths, especially in the joining together of several lines of evidence in order to gain a high degree of probability. Reid himself lectured on natural

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without belief there could be neither affirmation nor denial, nor should we have any form of words to express either Belief admits of all degrees, from the slightest suspicion to the fullest assurance. These things are so evident to every man that reflects, that it would be abusing the reader's patience to dwell upon them. . . . We give the name of evidence to whatever is a ground of belief (ibid. II.20, 177–78).

The notion of knowledge as justified true belief has been developed by the Reformed epistemologists, and is derived to some degree from Reid's philosophy. Their general argument is that belief in God is properly basic, and results from the proper operation of one's cognitive apparatus. This operation includes the acceptance of testimony, as Reid also argues. Thus they argue that Christian belief is rational. For apologetical applications of Reformed epistemology, see Dewey J. Hoitenga, Jr., *Faith and Reason from Plato to Plantinga: An Introduction to Reformed Epistemology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991) and Kelly James Clark, "The Reformed Epistemological Method" in *Five Views on Apologetics* (ed. Steven B. Cowan; Counterpoints Series; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000). A fundamental weakness of Clark's application is that he uses Reformed epistemology to argue for the rationality of Christian belief, not its truth. While this is helpful, it falls short of the traditional goal of defending the truth of Christian belief, and thus might be considered as a sort of "prolegomena" for the apologetical task. In fact, for the Reformed epistemologists, non-Christian positions are seemingly considered to be rational as well, which could lead to a relativistic quagmire. For an example of this critique, see Patrick J. Roche, "Knowledge of God and Alvin Plantinga's Reformed Epistemology" (*Quodlibet: Online Journal of Christian Theology and Philosophy* 4/4 [November 2002], http://www.quodlibet.net/roche-plantinga.shtml).

[21] Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, II.20, 179. This notion that knowledge is conditioned by the constitution of the human mind is one area of similarity with Kant. Note, however, that Reid explicitly disclaims any complete or exact enumeration of "first principles," in contrast to Kant's exposition of his exact and "necessary" categories.

[22] For example, Reid wrote, "Common sense and reason have both one author; that almighty Author, in all whose other works we observe a consistency, uniformity, and beauty, which charm and delight the understanding: there must therefore be some order and consistency in the human faculties, as well as in other parts of his workmanship." Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*, V.vii, 77. Similar sentiments can be found scattered throughout his writings. Woozley suggests that there are three ways in which Reid used the term "common sense": the body of propositions generally accepted as true, although not demonstrably so; the principle of self-evidence underlying those propositions; and the power of the mind by which we detect the truth of those propositions. He points out that there is a leap from saying that the mind is constituted in such a way that it must believe certain things, to saying that those things are therefore true. For Reid, however, this was not a problem, inasmuch as the trustworthiness of the Creator of the human mind would guarantee the trustworthiness of the human mind as well. See Woozley, Introduction to *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* xxxii–xxxvii.

theology as well, although his work was not published until 1981.[23] This se-
ries of lectures begins with an argument for the necessity of reason along-
side revelation in matters of religion. Reid wrote,

> It is no doubt true that Revelation exhibits all the truths of Natural Religion,
> but it is no less true that reason must be employed to judge of that revelation;
> whether it comes from God. Both are great lights and we ought not to put out
> the one in order to use the other. . . . Tis by reason that we must judge whether
> that Revelation be really so; Tis by reason that we must judge of the meaning
> of what is revealed; and it is by Reason that we must guard against any impi-
> ous, inconsistent or absurd interpretation of that revelation.[24]

Reid proceeded to lecture extensively on the proofs for God's existence from
causality, and especially design. In the later lectures he turned to an expo-
sition of the "natural attributes" of God—those that can be discerned from
nature by the use of reason. On the basis of these attributes he discussed
the natural and moral government of God, as evidenced in nature. In the fi-
nal lecture he returned to the theme of revelation, and stated the following
about its necessity:

> Hence we find that the doctrines of Natural Religion have been improved by the
> Speculations of Theologians and assisted by the representations of Deity given
> in the Sacred Scriptures. For no where do we find such a completed system of
> Natural Religion as in the Christian Writers. The being of God, is indeed so
> evident, from his works, & the conduct of his providence that no nation has
> been found so barbarous as to have *no* notions of Deity, at all, yet it is to be ex-
> pected that rude men if left to trace out his attributes by the mere force of
> their reason would form very gross conceptions, widely different from the pre-
> sentation of Scripture & the dictates of a Sound reason.[25]

This is the closest that Reid came to the Calvinist notion of the failure of
natural theology. He further wrote, "The first sentiments of the Deity were
thus lost, by the corruptions of human reason, the craft of the priest or the
cunning of the politician. We have seen that reason properly employed, will

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[23] Thomas Reid, *Lectures on Natural Theology (1780)* (ed. Elmer H. Duncan; Washington, DC:
University Press of America, 1981). Duncan refers in his introduction to the dispute whether the
notes were in Reid's own hand or were taken by a student, but certainly the work reflects the
thought, if not the exact words, of the Scottish philosopher. See Duncan, Introduction to Thomas
Reid, *Lectures on Natural Theology (1780)* xiv–xix.

[24] Ibid. 1–2. This statement could have been taken from any number of the later Princetonians.
See below for statements by Hodge and Greene on the use of reason with respect to revelation.
Duncan argues that one reason that Reid did not publish his lecture notes on natural theology was
that he was "nervous" about religion—that is, about possible repercussions within the Church of
Scotland. Reid was a member of the moderate party, and would have known about other moderate
philosophers, such as Francis Hutcheson, who had had problems with the evangelical or Calvin-
istic ("immoderate," as Duncan calls them!) wing. He refers to Witherspoon, among others, as one
who would have found the first sentence quoted above as a "damnable heresy." This seems a rather
odd evaluation, inasmuch as Witherspoon, a leading clergyman within the evangelical wing, was
also the great popularizer and proponent of Reid's philosophy as the president of Princeton Col-
lege. See Duncan, Introduction xx–xxii.

[25] Reid, *Natural Theology* 123.

point out the duties of Natural Religion, yet it is necessary to compleat our notions of them, that we be enlightened by a divine revelation."[26]

The Old Princeton theologians, such as Greene, clearly did not go so far as Reid did in his arguments for a natural theology. However, they obviously, and admittedly so, accepted the epistemological arguments of the common sense philosophy, including especially the notion of self-evident first principles. There are a number of reasons why it was easy for them to do so. First, many of the tenets of Common Sense Realism do, in fact, describe how people live in the "real" world. We all do act as if there is a real, external world, populated by other intelligent, feeling human beings, which we know through trusting our senses. Thus, "common sense" seemed to provide a basis for daily life as well as for science. One assumption, however, that lay under much of the philosophy, particularly in its application to natural theology, is that we live in a well-ordered universe, and that such order points to an intelligent cause. Thus, belief in God was also basic to Reid, who often refers to the Author of nature, the Creator, and so forth. However, he did not make such belief one of his first principles, but rather derived it.

Perhaps the most damaging criticism of common sense realism is the question, if these first principles are indeed the deliverances of "common sense" and "self-evident" and thus make a claim of universality and necessity, how is it that some intelligent and well-educated people deny them? Of particular importance to apologetics is the fact that if one removes the hidden assumption of God's creative power underlying the order of nature, and replaces it with naturalistic assumptions, then the universe would look like a very different place. That indeed is what happened in the later nineteenth century with the emergence of Darwinism. As a result, an apologetics based on the argument from design failed to be persuasive, as a plausible alternate explanation of apparent order became popular.

III. THE APOLOGETICS OF WILLIAM BRENTON GREENE, JR.

Greene published numerous articles and book reviews, especially in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, and in *The Princeton Theological Review*. Many of these articles dealt with apologetical themes, as would be expected. He published only one book, entitled *Christian Doctrine*, which had an intended audience of lay teachers in the church.[27] His apologetical views were most fully expounded in a six-part series of articles, totaling some 175

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[26] Ibid. 124. Reid thus viewed revelation as necessary because of the limitations on natural theology due to human corruption. However, he did not mention the need of special revelation in order to reveal God's redemptive purposes, the second reason commonly put forward by Reformed apologists. He also did not make the common distinction between general and special revelation, apparently reserving the term "revelation" for the latter. Even as a moderate within the Church of Scotland, he must have known these traditional Reformed distinctions.

[27] W. Brenton Greene, Jr., *Christian Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1910). This brief work, only 55 pages, was written in outline form, and included numerous Scripture references as well as cross references to the Westminster Confession of Faith. This work supported the traditional Calvinistic doctrines regarding the Bible, God, human sinfulness, redemption through Christ,

pages, entitled "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics."[28] Before examining that important series, his other apologetical articles will first be noted.

1. *"The Function of Reason in Christianity."*   The first article that Greene published on an apologetical theme was "The Function of the Reason in Christianity."[29] He defined reason, quoting Charles Hodge, as the "cognitive faculty, that which perceives, compares, judges, and infers."[30] In this article he sought to answer three questions: Does reason have a function in religion? What is the function of reason in Christianity? What is the function of reason with respect to the Bible, the inspired Word of God? In answering the first question affirmatively, Greene first refuted negative answers. In this he argued that the agnostics had false views of both knowledge and God underlying their denial of human ability to gain knowledge about God.[31] He argued that the mystics overstated the importance of feeling, to the exclusion of the intellect with respect to religion.[32] He considered the "exclu-

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the Christian life (especially with respect to the relationship of the Christian life to the moral law as summarized in the Ten Commandments), the means of grace, and eschatology. His purpose in this work was not to "defend" these positions, but rather to lay them out clearly.

[28] William Brenton Greene, Jr. "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics: I. Reality," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 9 (1898) 60–82; "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics: II. Duality," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 9 (1898) 261–88; "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics: III. Personality," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 9 (1898) 472–99; "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics: IV. Morality," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 9 (1898) 659–94; "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics: V. Immortality," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 10 (1899) 25–57; and "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics: VI. The Supernatural," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 10 (1899) 237–66. The last article was substantially revised and republished as "The Supernatural," in *Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary: Published in Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of the Seminary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912) 137–207.

[29] William Brenton Greene, Jr. "The Function of the Reason in Christianity," *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 6 (1895) 481–501.

[30] Ibid. 481. Hodge defines reason in this way in his *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 34, in the opening paragraph to his chapter on "Rationalism." Section 5 of that chapter is "The Proper Office of Reason in Matters of Religion." See footnote 40 for a summary of that section.

[31] Greene included Hamilton, Mansel, and Spenser among the agnostics. He wrote, "Is it impossible that knowledge should be partial and yet true so far as it goes? If so, only God can know anything; for only God can know everything. Thus the Agnostic's theory of knowledge must land him in universal skepticism." Greene, "Reason in Christianity" 482. He also opposed the view of God as being the infinite and the absolute, in which "infinite" was defined as "the all," rather than unlimited, and "absolute" defined as "the unrelated," rather than the non-dependent. "Again, not only need there not be any such infinite or absolute as the philosophical Agnostic supposes; there cannot be. The phenomenal or relative universe demands the absolute as its ground; and because it is its ground, the absolute must have come into relation to it. So, also, the infinite cannot be the all. The two are and must be radically distinct. The infinite is a term of quality; the all is a term of quantity. The infinite is the not-finite; the all is the sum of the finite" (p. 483).

[32] Greene mentioned Schleiermacher as the preeminent mystic. He wrote, "In the first place, feeling is impossible without the exercise of reason. Feeling presupposes intelligence. . . . Because some truths of religion are intuitive, it does not follow that all are." Greene, "Reason in Christianity" 485.

sionists," like the agnostics and mystics, to have overstated a partial truth.[33] On the other hand, his positive arguments that reason has a role in religion included the historical observation that Christianity had been very stimulating intellectually, and that the nature of faith itself is complex: "It is the consent of the will to the assent of the reason." [34] Further, he argued that "reason itself is a divine revelation. . . . Reasoning is controlled by laws which God has established and which reveal to us His intellectual nature. 'Our thoughts are not God's thoughts'; yet when we really think, it is in accord with the regulative principles of His thought. Logic binds our thinking because God is essentially logical."[35] Human reason itself reflects the reason of God, and from it derives its laws and its validity. Greene's final argument was that "The Bible established the right of reason in religion. . . . If specific statements are required, we have St. Peter's charge 'to sanctify in our hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear.'"[36]

The answer which Greene gave to his second major question, the function of the reason in Christianity, consists largely of a discussion of the limitations of reason with respect to religion. Rationalism was rejected for three reasons: "The human reason has been vitiated by human depravity. Sin has darkened the intellect as well as corrupted the heart."[37] "Even, however, if the reason of man had not been vitiated by sin, its function would still be limited; for it is, like its subject, finite."[38] Finally, human reason is not competent to discern the doctrine of God's grace in redemption, because grace relies on the good pleasure of God, and not on the necessity of his nature. For the knowledge of the reconciliation of sinners to a just God, we must rely upon the light of special revelation.[39] For these reasons, reason itself must be controlled by some rule. Feelings and conscience, even the historical Church, just as much as reason, have been corrupted by sin. Thus Greene

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[33] Greene defined the "exclusionists," such as G. H. Lewes and Michael Faraday, as those who regarded reason and revelation as independent and mutually exclusive. He wrote, "This view, we must admit, contains much more than a grain of truth. When God has spoken we cannot listen too reverently. . . . though reason be not called on to try the contents of a supernatural revelation, it must decide as to the evidence that it is from God." This argument is reminiscent of Hodge (see note 41 below). Greene also argued that there were true and false ways of understanding the phrase "above reason." The sense in which Greene regarded this as true is that truths may be "too large" for us, so that we can only know them "in part." He drew the analogy of seeing the ocean: the fact that only a small portion of it is seen does not mean that we cannot see it—we simply cannot see the whole. On the other hand, "above reason" could also be used in a way that Greene considered false, in the sense of transcending reason in its nature and not merely its extent. This, he argued, would not merely be beyond reason, but contrary to it. He drew the analogy of seeing oxygen gas; oxygen gas is invisible, and thus is not simply beyond vision, but contrary to it.

[34] Ibid. 488.

[35] Ibid. 489.

[36] Ibid. 491. Greene quoted 1 Pet 3:15, a classic proof text for apologetics.

[37] Ibid. 493.

[38] Ibid. 494.

[39] At this point Greene referred to the failing of the Deists in this matter, as well as to Kant, who reduced religion to morality, and thereby destroyed religion.

argues that the standard of reason must be found in the Scriptures, the inspired Word of God, who is the source of reason.

Then Greene laid out the function of reason in relation to the Bible. Of importance here is that he argued for a role for reason prior to the acceptance of the Scriptures, as well as a role for reason in its proper interpretation. He wrote,

> Reason should judge of the evidence that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and so to be received on His authority. Faith in them as such is irrational and impossible without evidence; for faith involves assent, and assent is conviction produced by evidence. Yet here, for the best results, reason must be to such a degree under the influence of the revelation as to be favorable towards its evidence.[40]

Greene's view of reason was the continuation of a well-established position within the Old Princeton tradition.[41] He followed in the paths set out origi-

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[40] Ibid. 499. Greene also argued for a positive role for reason in the work of exegesis, determining the meaning of Scripture, although he recognized a role here for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He also saw a role for reason in drawing out the system of truth taught in Scripture, through the development of definitions, creeds, and systematic theology.

[41] Charles Hodge had argued that reason had three proper uses in religion. First, reason, in the sense of intellectual understanding, is necessary in order to receive a revelation from God. He wrote, "Revelation is the communication of truth to the mind. But the communication of truth supposes the capacity to receive it. Revelations cannot be made to brutes or to idiots. Truths, to be received as objects of faith, must be intellectually apprehended. A proposition, to which we attach no meaning, however important the truth it may contain, cannot be an object of faith" (*Systematic Theology* I.49). Note here the assumption of a propositional content to revelation, and of the object of faith. Hodge, and the Old Princetonians in general, argued strongly that faith includes a cognitive aspect; e.g. faith in God includes some notion of who God is. Saving faith certainly included much more than this for them, but could not exclude it. For an extensive treatment of the notion of faith and belief in Old Princeton theology, see the chapter on faith in Hodge, *Systematic Theology* III.41–113; see also the articles by Benjamin B. Warfield, "'Faith in Its Psychological Aspects," and "Faith," reprinted in Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1952) 375–444.

The second use of reason in Hodge was to judge the "credibility" of a revelation. He argued that nothing is incredible (that which cannot be believed) except the impossible. Hodge defined this restriction in the following way: "(1.) That is impossible which involves a contradiction; as, that a thing is and is not; that right is wrong, and wrong right. (2.) It is impossible that God should do, approve, or command what is morally wrong. (3.) It is impossible that He should require us to believe what contradicts any of the laws of belief which He has impressed upon our nature. (4.) It is impossible that one truth should contradict another. It is impossible, therefore, that God should reveal anything as true which contradicts any well authenticated truth, whether of intuition, experience, or previous revelation" (*Systematic Theology* I.51). While Hodge recognized that this particular prerogative of reason could be abused, he seems to have made the assumption that in general, it would not be abused by "reasonable" men. In point of fact, the problem arises that many have argued against Christianity and the Christian revelation in Scripture as violating these restrictions. The application of reason does not seem to be as "neutral" as Hodge assumed.

The third use of reason given by Hodge was to judge the evidence supporting a revelation. He wrote, "1. That as faith involves assent, and assent is conviction produced by evidence, it follows that faith without evidence is either irrational or impossible. 2. This evidence must be appropriate to the nature of the truth believed. . . . 3. Evidence must be not only appropriate, but adequate. That is, such as to command assent in every well-constituted mind to which it is presented" (*Systematic Theology* I.53).

nally by Charles Hodge, and also followed by Greene's better-known contemporary, Benjamin Warfield.

2. *"The Apologetic Worth of Christian Experience."*   Greene tackled a different problem in apologetics with his article "The Apologetic Worth of Christian Experience," which was published in the Methodist Review in 1901.[42]

> Yet it must be admitted that the force of these evidences, or of any one of them, will be much greater for those who have themselves experienced the power of the Gospel. . . . His reason, because regenerated, will find nothing contradictory to itself or uncongenial in the Christian system. . . .

In his discussion, Hodge seemed to allow for general revelation and the sense of deity as types of evidence, but still seemed to assume that the human mind, even in its fallen state, is competent to judge rationally the evidence. His conclusion, however, introduced a note of ambivalence into the discussion: "Christians, therefore, concede to reason all the prerogatives it can rightfully claim. God requires nothing irrational of his rational creatures. He does not require faith without knowledge, or faith in the impossible, or faith without evidence. Christianity is equally opposed to superstition and Rationalism. The one is faith without appropriate evidence, the other refuses to believe what it does not understand, in despite of evidence which should command belief. The Christian, conscious of his imbecility as a creature, and his ignorance and blindness as a sinner, places himself before God, in the posture of a child, and receives as true everything which a God of infinite intelligence and goodness declares to be worthy of confidence. And in thus submitting to be taught, he acts on the highest principles of reason" (*Systematic Theology* I.55). Thus Hodge, like Greene in a later generation, recognized a limit to reason in submission to God.

Warfield wrote concerning the use of reason, "It is the distinction of Christianity that it has come into the world clothed with the mission to *reason* its way to dominion. Other religions may appeal to the sword, or seek some other way to propagate themselves. Christianity makes its appeal to right reason, and stands out among all religions, therefore, as distinctively, 'the Apologetic religion.'" Benjamin B. Warfield, Introductory Note to Francis R. Beattie, *Apologetics, or the Rational Vindication of Christianity, Volume I: Fundamental Apologetics* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1903) 26. However, he moderated his statements on reason somewhat in his article on "Apologetics" for *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1951 [1908]). There he wrote, "Though faith is the gift of God, it does not in the least follow that the faith which God gives is an irrational faith, that is, a faith without cognizable ground in right reason. We believe in Christ because it is rational to believe in him, not even though it be irrational. Of course mere reasoning can not make a Christian; but that is not because faith is not the result of evidence, but because a dead soul can not respond to evidence. The action of the Holy Spirit in giving faith is not apart from evidence, but along with evidence; and in the first instance consists in preparing the soul for the reception of the evidence." Here Warfield seems to place proper reasoning about the evidence alongside the response of faith, following regeneration, in a manner similar to Greene's contemporary treatment.

In both quotes, Warfield made reference to "right reason." On this, see Paul Helseth, "B. B. Warfield's Apologetical Appeal to 'Right Reason,'" where he argues that "right reason," for Warfield, is founded on the moral ability possessed only by the regenerate (*The Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 16 (1998) 156–77). For Cornelius Van Til's different assessment, see *The Defense of the Faith* (3d ed.; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1966) 264. Van Til refers the reader to Warfield's article on "Apologetics" in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. Van Til states, "Warfield accordingly attributes to "right reason" the ability to interpret natural revelation with essential correctness. This 'right reason' is not the reason of the Christian. It is the reason that is confronted with Christianity and possesses some criterion apart from Christianity with which to judge of the truth of Christianity."

[42] William Brenton Greene, Jr., "The Apologetic Worth of Christian Experience," *Methodist Review* 83 (1901) 756–72.

> The ordinary evidence ought to constrain us to take Christ as he is "freely of-
> fered to us in the Gospel." In view of these evidences, it is as irrational as it is
> wicked to reject him. Yet only the 'new heart' can *feel* the utter folly and awful
> sin of such a course. One must have Christ within him to discern his true glory.
> The evidences are fitted and intended to persuade us to make trial of him, but
> only that trial can bring out the full force of the evidences.[43]

Greene here pointed out that the believer is much better able to understand
and accept the evidence for Christianity than the unbeliever. However, he
fell short of making an explicit statement of an "antithesis"[44] between belief
and unbelief.

   3. *"The Practical Importance of Apologetics."*   Greene began his article
entitled "The Practical Importance of Apologetics" by defining apologetics:
"Apologetics is the science of the rational proofs that Christianity is the
supernatural and so the authoritative, the exclusive, the final, in a word,
the absolute religion."[45] In this article he set forth the dual roles of apolo-
getics, the negative and the positive. The negative role is to give an answer
to the critics of Christianity, and in fact, to show that their position is un-

   [43] Ibid. 771, 772. Emphasis is the author's.

   [44] This term, as used by Abraham Kuyper and his successors, refers to the absolute distinction
between believers and unbelievers in this world. For a description of Kuyper's use of the "antithe-
sis" and its relationship to world views, see my "Common Grace or the Antithesis? Towards a Con-
sistent Understanding of Kuyper's 'Sphere Sovereignty,'" *Pro Rege* 31/1 (September 2002) 1–13.

   [45] William Brenton Greene, Jr., "The Practical Importance of Apologetics," *PTR* 1 (1903) 200–
26. This journal was the last in a series of journals that expounded the Old Princeton theology,
and succeeded *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*. It met its own demise in 1929 when the
seminary was reorganized.

   In the article on "Apologetics" for *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, Warfield elevated apol-
ogetics as a department in theological encyclopedia alongside the exegetical, historical, systematic,
and practical theological departments, although he admitted that it was only in the nineteenth
century that apologetics had come into its own (as distinguished from apologies). He wrote, "So
soon as it is agreed that theology is a scientific discipline and has as its subject-matter the knowl-
edge of God, we must recognize that it must begin by establishing the reality as objective facts of
the data upon which it is based. One may indeed call the department of theology to which this
task is committed by any name which appears to him appropriate: it may be called 'general the-
ology,' or 'fundamental theology,' or 'principial theology,' or 'philosophical theology,' or 'rational
theology,' or 'natural theology,' or any other of the innumerable names which have been used to
describe it. Apologetics is the name which most naturally suggests itself, and it is the name which,
with more or less accuracy of view as the nature and compass of the discipline, has been conse-
crated to this purpose by a large number of writers from Schleiermacher down . . ." (*New Schaff-
Herzog* I.234). Warfield went on to state, "The business of apologetics is to establish the truth of
Christianity as the absolute religion directly only as a whole, and in its details only indirectly."

   Warfield saw theology as a "science," and stated that every science involved three things: the
reality of the subject matter; the ability of the human mind to study the subject matter; and some
means of bringing the human mind into contact with the subject matter (he used psychology and
astronomy as examples). He thus saw the task of apologetics as follows: "That a theology, as the
science of God, may exist, therefore, it must begin by establishing the existence of God, the ca-
pacity of the human mind to know him, and the accessibility of knowledge concerning him. In other
words, the very idea of theology as the science of God gives these three great topics which must
be dealt with in its fundamental department, by which the foundations for the whole structure
are laid,—God, religion, revelation" (ibid. I.235).

tenable.[46] The positive role is to "rationalize the supernatural,"[47] which is to say, to show that the supernatural, although "above" reason, is still congruous with it. The problem that reason has with the supernatural is not that it is irrational, but rather that it goes far beyond the rational. Greene proposed three areas in which apologetics should seek to "rationalize the supernatural." First, apologetics proves the reasonableness of the historical facts of Christianity. Second, it shows the reasonableness of the eternal truths of Christianity, which interpret those facts. Thirdly, it shows that "it is precisely because Christianity is incomprehensible that it is reasonable."[48] What he meant by this, is that, if Christianity is indeed the religion based on God's revelation, it must surpass human reason: "The supernatural would no longer be supernatural, if it could be expressed in terms of the natural."[49] Throughout his discussion Greene assumed that Christianity is rational, because God is rational (though far surpassing human rationality). Thus apologetics was seen as developing the proper use of reason with respect to religion.

4. *"The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics."*   Greene gave the fullest development of his apologetical system in his series of articles on the "Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics." The first article dealt with the topic of "Reality." He introduced the general subject by defining apologetics in almost identical form to that given earlier.[50] He further stated, "Apologetics . . . presupposes the denial or the doubt of Christianity; it assails unbelieving systems of the universe; if it appeals to the Bible, it is only as reason has proved the latter to be the Word of God."[51]

Greene went on to define the subject matter of the series. He wrote, "Metaphysics is 'the science of first and fundamental truths.' . . . Hence they are called first truths: they are prior to all experience; it starts out with them, it does not gather them. . . . Hence they are called fundamental truths: the knowledge of them conditions all other knowledge; the latter would lack coherence without the former."[52] Greene considered metaphysics to have two references, the epistemological (the process of knowing these metaphysical truths) and the ontological (the objects of metaphysical thought, the "transcendental realities"). It was with the latter that he was concerned in this

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[46] "It should qualify the believer to vindicate Christianity against all assaults" (Greene, "The Practical Importance of Apologetics" 217). "What, however, is meant by the vindication of our religion against all assaults is that the positions whence these proceed be shown to involve more serious difficulties than does Christianity" (ibid. 219).

[47] Ibid. 220. The phrase comes from Greene.

[48] Ibid. 222.

[49] Ibid.

[50] "Christian Apologetics is that theological science which sets forth the proofs to the reason that Christianity is the supernatural, the authoritative, the final religion, equally for us and for all men; in a word, the absolute religion." Greene, "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics. I. Reality" 60. This is almost verbatim from the definition quoted above from "The Practical Importance of Apologetics."

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid. 61.

series of articles, and in particular, with those truths which are first and fundamental for Christian apologetics.[53]

The first metaphysical truth with which Greene was concerned was "reality." He conceded that existence is more than what appears to us, and that what exists changes. However, he denied that there was a substratum underlying all appearances that is distinct from them, yet causing them to exist. In like manner, he rejected the Kantian notion of the *Ding an sich* as not only being unknowable, but as involving a hopeless contradiction at the root of all knowledge. Rather, he stated that the problem to be considered is "whether appearances do not manifest in all their changes that which itself persists through all its changes; whether existence is not the standing out of what subsists *in* itself, if not *of* itself; whether, in a word, every phenomenon is not itself substance or reality as we see it."[54] In other words, Greene was considering whether the objects of our knowledge have a real existence of their own, as opposed to an imaginary one. If objects lack real existence, then science of any variety, including theology would be useless. This particularly pertained to his own field of apologetics.[55] He considered pantheism and positivism to be the chief opponents of this view of reality. Pantheism denies that the world has being of its own apart from God, inasmuch as it considers all that exists to be at best manifestations of God.[56] Positivism, in asserting that all knowledge comes from experience through the senses, denies that we can know anything of reality. Rather, we are only aware of sensations and feelings. Greene argued that we are conscious of more than what the senses make known to us. He wrote, "Through [the senses] we are conscious of such sensations as sight and touch; but at the same time, in the same act of consciousness, we are conscious of a conviction that there is a real objective substance which is visible and tangible. That this is a true interpretation of consciousness is proved by the conduct of men universally."[57] Greene pointed to Bowen and John Stuart Mill as representatives of positivism. He further wrote, "What right, then, have they to discriminate and hold that consciousness is trustworthy as to sensations and phenomena, but not as to the conviction of reality which accompanies these?"[58]

In reading Greene, it becomes clear that he is relying on Scottish Common Sense Realism for much of his argumentation. In the above quote he evidenced his reliance by referring to the universal conduct of humanity as proof of his position. Thus in support of the metaphysical truth of reality, Greene

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[53] Greene readily admitted that he was swimming against the intellectual tide of the day in his focus on metaphysics: "Indifference to metaphysical inquiry is a characteristic of our time. Perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say that it is one of its chief characteristics" (ibid. 66).

[54] Ibid. 69.

[55] "All this is specially true in apologetics, the foundation of theology. Apologetics is the proof of the reality of theology. It is the scientific demonstration that the existences with which theology has to do are reality; that its doctrines are both true and relate to what has being of its own. . . ." (ibid. 71).

[56] Greene referred in particular to Spinoza and Hegel as representatives.

[57] Ibid. 73.

[58] Ibid. 74.

argued that human consciousness gives a conviction of objective reality. He further argued for the trustworthiness of consciousness. He stated that it is universally assumed because it is both self-evidently true and necessarily true, and as a result it is universally admitted, and persists in the behavior of those who deny it in their theories. Furthermore, experience verifies it: "Experience is neither the ground nor the proof of [the hypothesis of reality]. As we have seen it is prior to experience, and it needs no proof because it is self-evident. Nevertheless, experience both emphasizes and confirms it."[59]

Greene concluded by conceding that he had not "proven" reality, but that in the nature of the case, such proof would be impossible. As a fundamental truth, there is nothing beyond it to which to appeal. He wrote, "Hence, to prove truth, we must begin with truth; to establish reality we must have reality on which to ground it; to demonstrate anything, we must assume something. Otherwise, we shall argue in a circle. Ultimately, the thing to be proved will have to be its own proof, and so there will be no proof."[60] Thus reality, while it cannot be proven, must be assumed.

The second article in the series dealt with "Duality." By this Greene meant that there are two distinct kinds of reality, mind and matter. These are considered to be "essentially distinct and independent of one another, incapable of being resolved into one another, not to be explained by one another."[61] Thus Greene set "duality" in opposition to philosophical monism, whether materialism or idealism, in their various forms. After giving several objections to the different monistic theories, in order to show them to be untenable, he returned to supporting duality. One of his basic arguments again was that "duality has been and is the working hypothesis of the race. Men generally are neither materialists nor idealist, but dualists. They believe practically in the independent reality of mind and matter and in their mutual interaction. . . . In a word, the common sense of mankind is strongly and always on the side of duality."[62] Greene concluded that if one were a consistent realist, one must be a dualist.

[59] Ibid. 80.

[60] Ibid. 76. Greene also wrote, ". . . consciousness is ultimate. The ground of all proof, it itself is beyond proof. The final test of truth, its truth may be either assumed or denied, but can neither be demonstrated nor refuted. . . . We should frankly admit that reality, if asserted, must be assumed." There is a definite kinship between this argumentation and Cornelius Van Til's presuppositionalism. However, Van Til went one step further, and stated that we must presuppose the Triune God in order to ground and give meaning to consciousness. Greg Bahnsen argues that Van Til's method of presuppositional argument is similar, but not identical to, Kant's transcendental analysis of the preconditions for the intelligibility of human experience. See Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic: Readings & Analysis* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1998) 496–529.

A further point of similarity among these approaches is noted by T. J. Sutton in "The Scottish Kant? A Reassessment of Reid's Epistemology," in *The Philosophy of Thomas Reid* (ed. Melvin Dalgarno and Eric Matthews; Kordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1989). Sutton argues that Reid's appeal to common sense can be viewed as a type of transcendental argument. If so, then Van Til's presuppositional approach might be seen as an heir to the method of argumentation of Reid, via Greene and Old Princeton, as well as a response to Kant's methodology.

[61] Greene, "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics. II. Duality" 262.

[62] Ibid. 285. Once again, there is a strong use of common sense realism in Greene's argumentation.

The third article dealt with the fundamental metaphysical truth of "Personality." Greene defined "personality" as the belief that "mind exists as self-conscious entities that we designate persons."[63] Furthermore, these persons possess individuality, identity, and unity. These can be understood by what Greene opposed to them. First, he disputed the Associationist theory in which personality was considered to be an illusion consisting of a series of independent sensations.[64] This theory would deny both the identity and the unity of the self. Greene argued that both the laws of association and sensation itself presuppose the self that they are attempting to explain. Next, he dealt with the "Stream" theory, which he saw as accepting the unity but denying the identity of the self.[65] He concluded that, "Instead of explaining, it would explain away what Prof. James, as every serious man, regards as the mystery, nay the profound reality, of his being. It would degrade that which is ultimate in man as well as his distinctive characteristic into a mere feeling of warmth, a mere matter of emphasis. Its final equation is man = animal written in italics."[66] Greene also disputed James's claim not to need metaphysics, but to be basing his views entirely on empirical principles. He wrote,

> Not only is Prof. James' explanation of personality thoroughly metaphysical; it is imaginary metaphysics. It is not demanded or even suggested by the facts to be explained. It is necessitated only by its inventor's theory of "the superfluity of the soul." It is introduced only to explain that for which the soul would account. The truth however, is that the most immediate and direct of all our knowledge appears to be knowledge of self as a self-conscious identical unit or person.[67]

The third theory with which Greene dealt was the "Transcendental Theory," which he traced in its development from Kant through Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. While this theory upheld the identity and unity of the self, it failed to secure the individuality of the self, because it determined human self-consciousness and the Absolute to be identical, and the latter swallowed up the former.[68]

And so Greene arrived at his theory of "Personality." The "person" is aware of self as a unity in spite of varying attributes and faculties; self as an identity that persists through time and change; and self as an individual distinct from other personalities and realities. He again used the argument of "self-evidence" to support his view:

> We cannot practically deny personality any more than we can practically deny reality or duality. Just as we are constrained, whatever may be our theories, to live as if we were in a real world and as if the distinction between mind and matter were real; so, whatever may be our views, we cannot help acting as if

[63] Greene, "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics. III. Personality" 472. In this article Greene used the terms "self" and "soul" as synonymous with "personality."

[64] Greene cited Hume and John Stuart Mill as representative of the Associationists (ibid. 476, 479).

[65] Greene referred to William James as the proponent of this psychology (ibid. 481).

[66] Ibid. 484.

[67] Ibid. 486.

[68] Similar objections to Hegel's absolute idealism were made by later personalist idealists.

we stood in relation to persons. To do otherwise is impossible; for it would be to go against the ultimate self-evident reality of things.[69]

Greene concluded his article by arguing that in our awareness of our own personal dependence upon God, we sense that God, though infinite, is still a person. Thus personality is in a sense the "reality of reality."

The fourth fundamental truth of "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics" with which Greene dealt was "Morality." He stated that in this article he was moving from the realm of "facts," what is, to the realm of the ideal, what ought to be. The notion of "oughtness" implied two separate issues: whether there is an objective obligatory ideal, and whether we have free agency. After disposing of the objections to the former, Greene supported an objective obligatory ideal by several arguments. He defined his position by stating, "There is objective truth to which rational beings are under obligation to conform their characters and actions."[70] Among his arguments in support of this position was that the various positions all admitted to a phenomenon in human consciousness of an apparent objective obligatory ideal. If such were to exist, that would be an adequate explanation of the phenomenon, whereas the other positions had to construct elaborate, inconsistent arguments to explain it away. Greene further argued on the basis of universal human distinction between right and wrong (although he admitted disagreement as to the particulars). He also saw the persistence of the idea of duty as strong support for the notion. He wrote,

> This proof that we are elaborating is much strengthened by the persistence of the idea of duty. Persistence of belief is, as we saw also in the first number of this series, the final test of that self-evidence and necessity which characterize a genuine intuition, and which we have clearly observed in the case of our conviction as to an objective obligatory ideal. This is so because everything is against its fulfillment. Naturally man is not friendly to the idea of duty. He would give much to be emancipated from it. Yet he cannot silence its imperative.[71]

His final argument was that morality is essential to the notion of personality, that what is most real in oneself is "the feeling of responsibility to law, the consciousness of an objective obligatory ideal."[72] Thus, if personality be admitted, morality must be also.

Free agency, the second aspect of morality, was interpreted by Greene as meaning the self-determination of persons. In his words, free agency is, "the theory that we are, not the instrumental, but the efficient causes, of our own acts, resolutions, and even choices; and that in all this we are finally determined, not by anything outside of ourselves, but by our own nature."[73]

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[69] Ibid. 496. Greene went on to write, "In a word, not to accept personality as being the distinct identical entity that it seems to us to be in our consciousness of self is to set aside of all realities the most self-evident" (p. 498).

[70] Greene, "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics. IV. Morality" 680.

[71] Ibid. 684–85. Note again the common sense realism implicit in his argument.

[72] Ibid. 686.

[73] Ibid. 691. Greene argued against what he considered to be faulty views of free agency: independence of the will (from other faculties of the mind), indifference of the will (to varying motives),

Greene saw objections to free agency as falling into three categories: fatalism, materialism, and pantheism. He argued that free-agency, unlike its opponents, explains human consciousness of responsibility and self-determination. As he stated, "The other theories all, as we must now have inferred, leave at least the consciousness of freedom unexplained."[74] Further, free agency is involved in the notion of an objective obligatory ideal.

Greene saw as a more serious problem the assumed "metaphysical" difficulty that considered free agency and causation to be contradictory notions, especially as this difficulty was formulated by Kant, who insisted on making freedom a postulate of the practical reason, inasmuch as pure reason could not establish it. However, Greene argued that the "power of the will" and the "universal reign of causation" were contraries, not contradictories: freedom and non-causation are not the same attribute. He wrote,

> In a word, the power of will and the universal reign of causation are ultimate facts attested by primary principles in our constitution. That we cannot trace the connection between them is, therefore, no reason why they should not both be true. Nay, it strengthens the already stated presumption that they are. It is a characteristic of ultimate facts that they are independent. If a connection could be discovered between them, it would show that they were not ultimate, but met in a farther unity.[75]

Greene further argued that many great thinkers had supported both the universality of causation and free agency (among whom he named the Reformed theologians John Calvin, John Owen, and Jonathan Edwards).

In his fifth article in the series, Greene set himself a somewhat different task to accomplish: rather than establish a fundamental truth, he attempted to show that the doctrine of immortality is consistent with reason. His effort in this was not to establish whether the Bible taught such a doctrine, but rather to show that immortality is not contrary to reason. He stated regarding apologetics, "It is a primary aim, however, of apologetics to prove the Bible to be the infallible Word of God. It is, therefore, as in the case just noticed: we may not appeal to the Scriptures in a consideration of the fundamentals of apologetics itself."[76] Here, as also seen above, Greene assigned to reason, in the form of apologetics, the task of proving the Scriptures to be the Word of God. In line with this approach, Greene referred to and even quoted from Bishop Butler's *Analogy* numerous times in support of his arguments in this article.[77]

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the notion that the will determines itself (in spite of motives), and the notion that the will has absolute power over character (will determines character, rather than the latter—Greene admits influence, but not determination). In general, he argues against these positions on two grounds: either they imply that the person is divisible, composed of distinct faculties or powers; or they deny the law of causality in matters of the will; or both. See ibid. 686–88.

[74] Ibid. 691.

[75] Ibid. 693.

[76] Greene, "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics. V. Immortality" 25.

[77] This is not unusual, inasmuch as Butler dealt with the doctrine of immortality in the very first chapter of his book. See Butler, *Analogy*, Part One: Of Natural Religion; chapter I: Of a Future Life.

The basic argument that Greene employed in support of immortality was the universality of belief in some form of the doctrine, in all ages and among all nations.[78] Attempts to explain such a belief on grounds other than its reality fail. Greene's final conclusion to the article was that, while he did not claim to have proved the doctrine of the resurrection, he had shown that a revelation of such would not only not be irrational, but would even be probable.

The sixth, and last, article in the series "The Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics" dealt with the topic "The Supernatural." This article was revised and published some years later as part of a collection of essays by the faculty at Princeton in commemoration of the institution's centennial.[79] Greene began by defining what he meant by the term:

> By the Supernatural, then we do mean, being that is above the sequence of *all* nature whether physical or spiritual; substance that is not caused, and that is not determined whether physically and necessarily as in the case of physical nature or rationally and freely as in the case of spiritual nature; in a word, unique reality the essence of whose uniqueness is that the reality is uncaused, self-subsistent and autonomous. We call this Supernatural the Infinite to denote the absence of limitation. We call it also the Absolute to express perfect independence both in being and Action. We call it, too, the Unconditioned to emphasize freedom from every necessary relation. In short, we apply all three terms to it to affirm the absence of every restriction. Such is the supernatural that we are about to consider. Does it exist? Does it manifest itself? What is its nature? If a person, can he reveal himself immediately as such? These are the inquiries which we shall raise. And the radical distinctness of the Supernatural from the natural, whether physical or spiritual; and the singleness of the Supernatural;—these are the two positions which our definition as it has been unfolded will call on us to guard most carefully.[80]

It is clear that Greene was not referring simply to some unseen spiritual realm as the "supernatural," but rather to the notion of God.[81]

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[78] For example, in his conclusion to this part of his argument, Greene wrote, "Though often they cannot dispel all doubt concerning its reality, though it is opposed with ever-increasing subtilty and earnestness, though there is much in us and in our circumstances to incline us to discredit it, though all appearances seem to be against it we, and with tenacity proportioned to our development, insist on holding to the hope of it. That we cannot demonstrate it is not more evident than that we must believe it." Greene, "Immortality" 34.

[79] Greene, "The Supernatural," in *Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary: Published in Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of the Seminary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912) 137–207. Citations which follow are to the later essay. In addition to being a revision of his earlier article, this essay represented one of the last writings that Greene published in the area of apologetics.

[80] Ibid. 141.

[81] Greene further wrote, "Physical and human nature, therefore, are alike in the most comprehensive and significant respect. They are both of them, though differently, yet really, caused and determined. They both of them presuppose a creator and reveal a preserver and governor, uncaused, self-subsistent and autonomous. This is the distinction in comparison with which all other distinctions are as nothing, and it is to this distinction that the definition of the Supernatural as the spiritual is untrue" (ibid. 141). This distinction was later made fundamental by Van Til in his argumentation of the Creator-creation distinction as being the two "levels" of reality. While

Greene defended his three defining terms against common misconceptions. First, the Infinite was often construed (as by the Idealists) to include the all, but it simply means that it is not limited. The Absolute, in being independent of all else, does not have to be isolated. The Unconditioned does not have to lack any relations to anything; it lacks any necessary relations. In his defense of these conceptions Greene once again appealed to human consciousness, especially of individuality.

The importance of the topic of the "Supernatural" to Greene was indicated as he wrote, "Thus apologetics, dogmatics, philosophy, science, morality, religion, individual progress, civilization in general, presuppose and even demand the Supernatural. Of all truths the most metaphysical, no other is so intensely practical. Its atmosphere is necessary to life."[82] This quote also reveals the depth of his commitment to this notion.[83]

After discussing and dismissing as untenable the three alternatives to belief in the Supernatural (positivism, monism, and pluralism[84]), Greene turned to his arguments in support of the Supernatural. As one might expect after having examined his earlier articles, one of the chief arguments is the universal belief in the Supernatural, as evidenced by the universal existence of religion in all known cultures. It has also been supported by the "ablest thinkers in all ages."[85] He furthered argued that there are necessary laws in thought which presuppose the Supernatural: he referred to the notion of causality as requiring a self-subsistent uncaused cause. He also wrote, "the ground that . . . every thought of the finite presupposes is, in the last analysis, the Supernatural. Unless you posit this and thus find in it a self-subsistent ground of being, the finite universe, which cannot be conceived without a ground, is left without one."[86]

His conclusion then was that "the Supernatural is at the end of all thinking." By this he meant, that consistent thought and analysis of reality would

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this distinction is hardly unique or unusual, Greene and Van Til both emphasize it with respect to an apologetical understanding of God. Van Til in general opposed defenses of the "supernatural" as proving too little, and thus missing the goal of apologetics; but as Greene defined the term, he could not make that objection.

[82] Ibid. 144. Metaphysics for Greene, as mentioned in the discussion of the first article, involved the study of "first and fundamental truths," which, by the nature of the case, were unprovable, but provided the basis for the proof of everything else.

[83] The idea that God must be presupposed for every area of life and study foreshadows the later development of presuppositional apologetics by Cornelius Van Til.

[84] "In a word, the refutation of positivism is that it is a theory of knowledge which is destructive of all knowledge" (ibid. 151–52).

Greene dealt with both materialistic monism and idealistic monism. The former collapsed because it "get[s] rid of the Supernatural only by putting the natural in its place." In so doing, it not only begged the question, but must make impossible assumptions. The latter was a better theory, but failed to account for the individuality of persons, as revealed by human self-consciousness, and ended up by putting humanity in the place of God, by "making the human self-consciousness and the absolute 'identical quantities'" (ibid. 160). For Greene, pluralism failed, because it failed to give unity to the universe and yielded, at best, a finite god.

[85] Ibid. 170.

[86] Ibid. 174.

lead one to conclude the necessity of the existence of the Supernatural as the ground of that reality.

Greene next turned to a familiar line of Calvinistic argument: the universal human consciousness of God. He stated, "all men may know, and, as a matter of fact, most men do know, the Supernatural. Though they can neither see nor hear nor touch nor taste nor smell it, they are often awed by it; in their more serious moments they feel its presence; and so they must be conscious of it."[87] Continuing in his line of argumentation he wrote, "Beyond all this, the ultimate facts, the best attested realities, when considered objectively, that is, in themselves, quite as much as when viewed subjectively, that is, as necessities of thought, reveal the Supernatural as the fact which they all presuppose, as the reality which alone gives to them reality."[88] These ultimate facts included finite reality, duality, and finite egos. In fact, Greene stated that "self-consciousness cannot be true and not develop God-consciousness," and immediately cited Calvin in support![89]

Greene concluded this section of the essay by stating that the denial of the reality of the Supernatural would lead one to "absolute nescience and practical nihilism." He conceded that a formal demonstration of the Supernatural was impossible, but that such would be expected, inasmuch as if its existence could be grounded in a deeper reality, it would not be the Supernatural! Thus he posed the two alternatives of nihilism and belief in God as the two logically consistent positions one could hold.[90]

In the remaining sections of "The Supernatural" Greene argued that the Supernatural had manifested itself, in a partial manner adapted to humanity, so as to be known. He argued, "We cannot know that it exists and not know something of what it is. Thus the mere question of whether the Supernatural can manifest itself implies that it has done so sufficiently to be apprehended."[91] In this section, Greene argued for what is commonly referred to as "general" or "natural" revelation in Reformed theology.[92]

Greene next supported the "personality" of the Supernatural. He argued that the essence of personality does not lie in relationships to others, as had

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[87] Ibid. 178. This is a form of Calvin's argument for the sense of deity, as he formulated it in the *Institutes* I.3–5.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid. 179.

[90] "If we could ground it in any thing deeper and so prove its existence strictly, we should only prove that it was not the Supernatural whose existence we had proved. From its very nature the Supernatural must be incapable of formal demonstration" (ibid. 180). This argument is similar to Van Til's later argument that the "proof" of God must be indirect, rather than direct. In fact, in citing this section Van Til states, "At this point, as at some others, Professor Greene virtually uses the argument from presupposition" (*Defense of the Faith* 271, n. 19). Van Til also argued for the two mutually exclusive options of "presupposing" God, or losing all ground for knowledge.

[91] Ibid. 187. In this section Greene argued against the pantheists, the Ritschlians, and the agnostics. His conclusion was that, "In a word, all nature, both spiritual and physical, *must* manifest the Supernatural; and in all the universe we should discern the manifestation. In this nature finds the sufficient reason for its being, the ultimate condition of its existence" (ibid. 189).

[92] "General" revelation refers to the scope of God's revealing himself to all humankind, as opposed to the chosen few; "natural" revelation refers to the means of revelation being through nature, i.e. all that is created bearing the "imprint" of its Creator.

been stated by pantheists and idealists such as Spinoza and Fichte, but rather in self-consciousness and self-determination. As the "first cause" the Supernatural could only originate action by being self-determining. Greene also argued that "The Supernatural, though he must be at least personal, cannot be higher than personal."[93] He stated that personality is the highest possible mode of existence, though there can be higher and lower kinds of personality: "In self-consciousness and self-determination, that is, in personality, we meet determination which is as evidently ultimate as it is self-evident."[94]

After establishing the Supernatural as Personal, in the final section of his essay Greene discussed "The Personal or Immediate Manifestation of the Supernatural." He referred to such manifestations as direct communication, miracles, regeneration, and the Incarnation. In each of these cases, the action was personal, occurring in nature, but not from nature.[95] Greene argued that such personal manifestations of the Supernatural were not only possible, but to be expected. He saw rejection of such possibility as having begged the question, and as being based on an unprovable *a priori* assumption of the uniformity of nature.

In the discussion supporting the manifestation of the Supernatural, Greene dealt with the problems which human sin creates in these regards. First, sin had affected creation so that natural revelation is not as extensive or as clear as it would otherwise have been. Secondly, sin adversely affected human ability to interpret that natural revelation. Thirdly, sin necessitated a revelation of God's free grace to sinners, which natural revelation, by the nature of the case, could not reveal.[96] This recognition of the impact of sin

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[93] Ibid. 194. In this section, Greene slips from using the impersonal pronoun "it" to the personal pronoun "he" with reference to the Supernatural.

[94] Ibid. 196.

[95] "Such supernatural acts as these, then, are not simply truly personal; they are *only* personal: indeed, they appear conspicuously supernatural just because they are only personal; though they occur in nature, and though they need not and should not be conceived as violating or even as suspending any law of nature, they are so evidently not at all of nature, they are so manifestly due wholly to wisdom and power independent of it and superior to it, that they must proceed from the Supernatural Person alone. If they took place, they cannot but be interventions of his in the ordinary course of nature. Could they, then, take place? This is the question of questions to the Christian" (ibid. 196).

[96] "This conclusion is much strengthened by the fact that the course of human development, and specially of human religious development, has been interrupted and perverted by sin. Hence, though the normal religious needs of men did not demand, as we have just seen that they do demand, the personal intervention of God in human life and history, his abnormal needs brought about by the entrance of sin would so require. Thus, because sin has marred the workmanship of God in physical nature and has defaced his image in the human soul and has deflected his development of the race, the revelation of the Supernatural in and through the natural is far from being as extensive as or what otherwise it would have been. Again, because of the noetic efforts [sic] of sin we can not discern fully or interpret truly even the partial and perverted revelation of the Supernatural which the natural still affords. Once more, and as what is most important, sin makes necessary the revelation of a new kind of knowledge, of that with regard to God which nature could by no possibility reveal. Nature can reveal only the essential attribute of God, only what he must be and, consequently, must require because he is God; but what guilty sinners need to know is his grace and how it can be obtained, that is, the free purpose of his heart, and this can be known only as he himself shall directly declare it" (ibid. 205).

upon the human intellect, so as to prevent the true interpretation of natural revelation again reflected Calvin's emphasis, in which natural revelation could only be read aright through the "spectacles" of Scripture.[97]

In his conclusion Greene stated that the Supernatural is the ground and proof of everything, and thus nothing could be the ground and proof of the Supernatural. In other words, he did not claim to have "proved" God, but rather to have shown that God must be assumed or reason itself would be rendered absurd and useless.[98]

IV. CONCLUSION

There are several notable characteristics to William Brenton Greene, Jr.'s approach to the apologetical task. At numerous points he clearly reflected his Reformed heritage in the tradition of Calvin, especially with respect to his recognition of the effect of human sinfulness upon the exercise of reason in the interpretation of natural revelation. His distinction of natural and special revelation was also part of that tradition. However, he also assigned to reason the task of determining whether the Scriptures themselves are the Word of God, prior to accepting their message. In this he continued a theme common in Hodge and Warfield, but inconsistent with Calvin's notions of the "self-authenticating" nature of Scripture, as well as the preeminent role of the witness of the Holy Spirit in the acceptance of Scripture.

Much of the specific argumentation by Greene in his apologetics relied on the approach of the Scottish Common Sense Realism, such as the acceptance of the reliability of testimony as evidence for the truth, arguing from the "common consciousness" of humanity, and relying frequently on "self-evident" truths. These all reflect the Old Princetonian commitment to the Scottish Common Sense Realism, but ignore the noetic effect of sin as implied by the Reformed doctrine of total depravity. Thus there is an inconsistency at the root of his apologetical system, which prevents it from developing into a fully Reformed apologetics. In the case of Greene at least, the "framework" provided by the Scottish philosophy also influenced the content of the apologetics.

The focus of Greene's Old Princeton apologetics, derived from the Scottish Common Sense Realism, on the "common consciousness" of humanity failed to account for the differences in presuppositions that provide differing frames of reference and interpretation; and this helps to account for its inconsistency in considering the depth of the corruption of sin and fallenness upon

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[97] See Calvin, *Institutes* I.6.1.

[98] "It is true that no one of these has been in the strict sense demonstrated. But in the nature of the case this is impossible. Himself the ground and so proof of everything, there is nothing that can be the ground and so proof of the Supernatural. Yet as the building necessarily evidences the foundation on which it rests; so all nature, and especially that in it which is highest and surest, namely, reason, demands the reality in the above respects of the Supernatural. This must be granted or reason must be stultified. To have shown this is thus both the utmost that could be shown and in itself enough" (ibid. 207). The metaphor of a building "presupposing" the unseen foundation was later adopted by Van Til in *The Defense of the Faith* 103.

the human intellect.[99] A consideration of a Kuyperian notion of the antithesis, as expressed in conflicting worldviews, may be both more fruitful and more biblical for accounting for the religious root of the differences that exist. The explicit recognition in apologetics that human reason is not neutral, and thus cannot serve as the final arbiter, came in the next generation as one of Greene's students, Cornelius Van Til, developed his presuppositional approach.

[99] For an extensive discussion of these issues, see George M. Marsden, "The Collapse of American Evangelical Academia," in *Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God* (ed. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983) 219–64. For an application of this critique to a particular theologian, see George M. Marsden, "J. Gresham Machen, History, and Truth," *WTJ* 42 (1979) 157–75.