

The Confusion Understanding the Trinity¹

A Typical Atheist View

Richard Dawkins summarizes the age old atheist problem of trying to understand the Trinity and, in not understanding it, using it as a reason to reject Christianity specifically.

“Rivers of medieval ink, not to mention blood, have been squandered over the 'mystery' of the Trinity, and in suppressing deviations such as the Arian heresy. Arius of Alexandria, in the fourth century AD, denied that Jesus was consubstantial (i.e. of the same substance or essence) with God. What on earth could that possibly mean, you are probably asking? Substance? What 'substance'? What exactly do you mean by 'essence'? 'Very little' seems the only reasonable reply. Yet the controversy split Christendom down the middle for a century, and the Emperor Constantine ordered that all copies of Arius's book should be burned. Splitting Christendom by splitting hairs – such has ever been the way of theology. Do we have one God in three parts, or three Gods in one? The Catholic Encyclopedia clears up the matter for us, in a masterpiece of theological close reasoning: 'In the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these Three Persons being truly distinct one from another. Thus, in the words of the Athanasian Creed: 'the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods but one God.' ”

Dawkins continues:

“The other thing I cannot help remarking upon is the overweening confidence with which the religious assert minute details for which they neither have, nor could have, any evidence. Perhaps it is the very fact that there is no evidence to support theological opinions, either way, that fosters the characteristic draconian hostility towards those of slightly different opinion, especially, as it happens, in this very field of Trinitarianism.”

This chapter will not delve into the whole history of the Trinity debate. That is so well covered by the early Church Fathers and Church Councils between 1900 – 1600 years ago. What I will

¹ What motivated me to write this chapter was this from the Sunday Time columnist Dominic Lawson, in an article he wrote previously that he has now sent to me, writing as an Atheist, but married to a Catholic, observing his daughter in a Mass. He comments: *“Still, I don't envy the priest who is charged with instructing her in the Catechism and in the astonishingly contrived concept of the Trinity. On the other hand, she still believes in Santa Claus, so anything is possible.”* The article “Christmas for Atheists” is moving as the personal story told is deeply touching, but nevertheless, it is replete with errors and misunderstandings of Jewish and Christian teachings and I thought deserved comment.

attempt to do first is to establish the time line of the Trinity in the Bible. This then helps tell us what we should expect the Trinity to be. Also, it informs us, logically, what it can't be. It informs us why the early Christians jumped on Jesus as the manifestation of one part of this Trinity. From that foundation, I then want to demonstrate its overlap with the idea of the human form being the "Image of God." Following on from that, I want to show why we all express the Trinity in everything we do (including Dawkins). Indeed, the very fact of being human is inseparably linked to an understanding of the Trinity.

The Triune Godhead of the (Jewish) Old Testament

In chapter 6, it was very clearly demonstrated that in the Godhead, right from the start of the Book of Genesis until the very last book of the Old Testament, the Book of Malachi, there was another party, a person who was acting, on earth, for God. God was then from the earliest recordings in Genesis to be both immaterial and to have a physical presence, when required, on earth. It is also clear from those prophetic verses in the Old Testament, outlined in Chapter 6, that this physical embodiment of God would also be the Messiah. For Christians Jesus was that Messiah; for the Jews, He was not. What is more, they make no connection between the Messiah as being one of the distinct natures of God. They are still waiting for the very earthly Messiah, a great political and military leader. There are several hundred of these clear indications of at least two parts of the Godhead being immaterial and physically present on earth. Of the 39 Books in the Old Testament, fully 24 Books have prophetic references to the second part of the Godhead. If you add in the extra Roman Catholic Books, seven in number, that are missing from the Protestant Bible, which I have used for the preparation of this book, the number is bigger still. The Holy Spirit, or the third part of the Holy Trinity was also attested by scripture right from the opening of Book of Genesis and, once again, to the last book of the Old Testament, the Book of Malachi.

There are 3 specific Holy Spirit references:

Psalms 51:11 *"Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your **Holy Spirit** from me."*

Isaiah 63:10 *“But they rebelled and grieved His **Holy Spirit**; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, And He fought against them.”*

Isaiah 63:11 *“Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: “Where is He who brought them up out of the sea With the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His **Holy Spirit** within them,”*

There are at least 87 specific mentions of the Spirit of God/the Lord being an active agent in this world of ours. These are listed in the italic font, in Chapter 6 as part of the unfolding of all the Old Testament prophecies that predict the coming of the Messiah, that we Christians see as Jesus.

So, the evidence from the old Jewish scriptures, written from approximately 1400 BC to 400 BC, tell us that God is a transcendental and immaterial presence which has a physical counterpart (for Christians, this is the Messiah or Jesus Christ) as well as an active Holy Spirit, or Spirit of the Lord, or God. It is very hard indeed not to conclude that even for the strictest Jew, who denies Jesus, that at least the Godhead is made up of three distinct manifestations.

My examination of Holy Scripture now leads me to look at the Gospel witness testimonies and what they had to say about the triune nature of God.

The Trinity in the Gospel Testimonies

So it was clear to the Jews of the 1st Century, that God, if you were to actually observe or sense Him, would be by His personal manifestation as a man or by feeling the Presence of the Holy Spirit of God/The Lord. In the Gospels, this is affirmed in all four books at least 28 times.

The Virgin is reported to be impregnated by the Holy Spirit Matthew 1:18

Ditto Matthew 1:20

Jesus is baptised by the Holy Spirit and God announces His pleasure in this event Matthew 3:16/17

Jesus quotes Isaiah 42:1-4 clearly indicating the Trinity of God, His Servant (Jesus) who God has placed His Spirit on to “declare justice to the Gentiles” Matthew 12:18

Jesus casts out all sorts of evils from people via the power of the Spirit of God

Matthew 12:28

Not recognising the presence of the Spirit in Jesus was something they could not deny as the evidence of all His healings were there

Matthew 12:32

Jesus teaches that in Him all triune aspects of the Trinity are present

Matthew 23:18

A very clear manifestation of the Trinity: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."* as Jesus gives His disciples the Great Commission

Matthew 28:19

As in Matthew, the Baptism of Jesus shows the triune aspects of the Godhead

Mark 1:10

Same as Matthew 12:32

Mark 3:29

All three elements of the Trinity, Jesus as God, "the Holy one" and is powered by the Holy Spirit

Luke 1:35

All three manifestations of the Trinity are present at the Baptism of Jesus

Luke 3:22

Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit so He is empowered to conduct His radical healing Ministry

Luke 4:18

After a passage of teachings Jesus reveals Himself to the innocent as the physical embodiment of the Spirit, giving us all three parts of the Trinity

Luke 10:21-22

Same as Matthew 12:32

Luke 12:10

All elements of the Trinity are present at the Baptism of Jesus

John 1:32

The Godly powers of Jesus, given by the Spirit are unlimited

John 3:34

Jesus teaches that God is the Spirit and that He is it

John 4:21-26

Jesus teaches that Moses taught the Jews about Him in the Shema prayer, which is used to establish the oneness of God. Moses used the same word "one" God, as used for the unity of man and woman in Genesis 2:24 (two persons, man *and* a woman from one flesh) thus, paradoxically, preparing the ground for the Trinity as three persons in one God.

John 5:45-47

Jesus is teaching He is the Holy One of God. He is divine. He speaks about God. He also speaks of the Holy Spirit *"The Spirit gives life"*. Just as physical flesh gives birth to physical life, so the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. He says, *"The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life"*

John 6:60-7:13

Jesus quotes from the Hallel Psalms, saying He is the Living Water given by the Spirit

John 7:37-39

The judging wisdom or spiritual element of the Trinity is described by Jesus who also equates Himself with God

John 8:13-16

The voice of God is with Jesus, another part of the Trinity

John 12:23-36

Jesus is teaching His co-equality with God, demonstrating two aspects of the Trinity

John 13:14-17

The Comforter or Helper that God would send via the Holy Spirit, would be synonymous with Jesus

John 14:26

Jesus teaches that the Spirit comes forth from the Father and is thus post the Father and the Son. The teaching of the Trinity is clear

John 15:26/27

These verses clearly show Jesus clearly revealing the Trinity, in Him and through the Helper to come via the Spirit

John 16:1-15

Jesus, with Godly status promises to His disciples to deliver the Holy Spirit John 20:22

It can't be said that the Trinity is not in the Gospels, or made up at a later date. As you can see, it's richly embedded in the four Gospel testimonies.

The Trinity in the History (Acts of the Apostles), Letters (Epistles) & Prophecy (Revelation) of the New Testament

The Gospel writer Luke, in his historic recording of the early Church (Acts), the letter writing of Paul, an unknown writer (Hebrews), Peter and John (letters and Revelation) in 17 of the remaining 23 books of the New Testament attest to the triune nature of God. There are over 50 triune teachings in these books.

Jesus teaches via the Holy Spirit post His Ascension (divinity affirmed) Acts 1:2

Jesus, equating Himself with the Father, is directing the Holy Spirit to act via His disciples

Acts 1.4-5,8

Jesus is declared as both man and God and embodying the Holy Spirit. Jesus as Messiah is also affirmed, citing Psalm 110

Acts 2:32-36

Stephen equates Jesus with the Just One, God and the Holy Spirit

Acts 7:51-53

Peter acknowledges Jesus as God and filled with the Holy Spirit

Acts 10:38

Paul declares Jesus, God, Son of God and full of the Holy Spirit	Romans 1:3-4
Ditto	Romans 5:1-5
Paul utters multiple declarations of the triune nature of the Godhead	Romans 1:8-14
Ditto	Romans 9:1-5
Paul equates Jesus with God and the Holy Spirit	Romans 14:14-18
Paul equates the Gospel to be that of God, therefore equating the Good News with Jesus; Paul's instruction to teach the Gentiles is given from Jesus via the Holy Spirit	Romans 15:14-21
Paul affirms Jesus as the Lord God and notes that the people of Corinth have received His Spirit	1 Corinthians 1:2-4
Paul declares Jesus as God via the power of the Wisdom of the Lord	1 Corinthians 2:1-8
After declaring Jesus as God, Paul then confirms He teaches by the power of the Spirit from God	1 Corinthians 2:12
Paul equates God and Jesus as one and the same and he remarks on the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit	1 Corinthians 6:11
Jesus is the Lord, if the fulfilment of all Holy Scripture and His Spirit fills all believers	2 Corinthians 1:20-22
Jesus is the Living God whose teachings, via the Spirit, are written on the Corinthians' hearts	2 Corinthians 3:3
Only God can bring you into the heavenly home. Only Jesus is the key to entering that home, therefore they are one and the same. His Spirit, if with you, will get you to heaven	2 Corinthians 5:1-11
A Trinitarian benediction ends this letter	2 Corinthians 13:14
The promise of salvation given to Abraham, by God, is only obtained by Jesus by having faith and receiving the Spirit	Galatians 3:1-14
There is a Trinitarian opening to this letter	Ephesians 1:3
Jesus as God, through the Spirit unites Jew and Gentile	Ephesians 2:14-18
Paul equates Jesus with God and affirms that he received His instruction from the Holy Spirit which we know was Jesus on the road to Damascus	Ephesians 3:1-7
Paul focuses us on all three aspects of the Godhead emphasising the Oneness of God	Ephesians 4:1-7

Paul, having previously declared Jesus to possess the keys to the Kingdom at Judgment Day, now affirms the Holy Spirit and God to be that same entity which will judge on Judgement Day. He also warns us to be prepared for that Day, as God in Christ forgives

Ephesians 4:25-32

Paul reaffirms that in worshipping the Lord, this is God's Spirit and that of Christ Jesus

Philippians 3:1-6

Paul reaffirms he took His commission from God as we know Him being Christ Jesus on the road to Damascus. To his audience, he reminds them that God revealed Himself to have

"love in the Spirit," via the teachings of Christ and the Gospels
Colossians 1:1-8

Paul reaffirms God and Jesus being one and the same and acknowledges the Gospel, or Good News, was delivered to his audience by the Holy Spirit
1 Thessalonians 1:1-6

The will of God is in Jesus and His Spirit is in us, so don't disrespect that Trinitarian relationship
1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

Paul teaches that God chooses you for salvation as you are sanctified by the Spirit since you have understood the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ, thereby teaching the Trinity (God, the Spirit and Jesus all in one) to his audience
2 Thessalonians 2:13-16

Paul, in a wonderfully short poem, sums up the Triune nature of the Godhead
1 Timothy 3:16

Paul reminds his audience of the three parts of the Trinity: Christ Jesus, giver of the Gospels or "that good things which was committed to you," who is the Holy Spirit, as well as the Lord
2 Timothy 1:13-18

Paul teaches that God our Saviour appears as Man (Christ Jesus) from whom we derive our salvation as we receive a part of this Holy Spirit in us.

Titus 3:1-8

The unknown author of this book weaves in all aspects of the Triune nature of God

Hebrews 2:1-4

The Holy Spirit speaks and it is equated with the voice of Christ, the Living God

Hebrews 3:7-15

The Messiah is outlined on the Old Testament by God; once you understood this, you accepted the Holy Spirit and “tasted the good word of God” or the New Covenant delivered in the Gospels by Jesus
Hebrews 6:1-6

The Holy Spirit, via the Gospel teachings, make us aware that the way to God is through Jesus who embodies the New Covenant as promised in the Old Testament. Christ is the “eternal Spirit” or God given, enduring, and forever sacrifice
Hebrews 9:6-15

Peter, in his address to his audience, reminds the people of God that they are set aside by the Holy Spirit, that they only receive it via the sacrifice of Jesus and acceptance of the New Covenant
1 Peter 1:2

Peter teaches that the Spirit of Christ is in the Old Testament prophets and that His new Gospel was sent by the Holy Spirit from heaven
1 Peter 1:10-12

Peter teaches that the Spirit has purified via your understanding the Word of God which lives forever in the Gospel preached by Jesus
1 Peter 1:22-25

You can blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ, therefore Peter is equating Him with God; conversely you praise His name if you are filled with His Spirit
1 Peter 4:12-16

The prophetic Word of God was revealed to Peter at the Transfiguration and was always there in scripture and will rise like the Morning Star (Jesus) in your hearts, via the power of the Holy Spirit
2 Peter 1:16-21

Often thought of as a later addition as it does not appear in the earliest extant manuscripts, John declares that the Father (God), the Word (Jesus) and the Spirit, that the “three are one.”
1 John 5-7

However, *what is not contested in the next verse* where the Spirit (of God), is that the water and the blood (Jesus at His Baptism and his Crucifixion) are described by John: “these three agree as one.”
1 John 5:8

Jesus equated Himself with the Spirit and Lord, the Tree of Life, or God
2:7 Revelation

Jesus says His word is the word of the Spirit and He is in-charge of granting eternal life (or not)
2:11 Revelation

Jesus equates Himself with the Spirit and with the giver of manna (God given bread)
2:17 Revelation

Jesus equates Himself with the Spirit and as the author of the “Book of Life” or God
Revelation 3:5-6

Jesus speaks once again as the Spirit and makes it aware to all that everybody will know His New Name (God). Revelation 3:11-13

Jesus as the Spirit confirms His co-equality with God Revelation 3:21-22

At the closing of the Bible Jesus is the Creator (God) of David, heir to the Davidic line (Messiah) and the Spirit Revelation 22:16-17

It can only be very clear to all who have looked carefully at the Old and the New Testament, that the Godhead was thought of as having three parts to its one whole Being. It should come as no surprise that the early Church Fathers did not veer from this. Theophilus, who was the sixth of a line of succession from the Apostles as the Bishop of Antioch, the seat where the word “Christian” came from, is the first to describe this specific understanding as the Trinity. He is next in the line of succession from Ignatius, in the order of the Church Fathers, who was a direct contemporary of the Apostles – or, if not all of them, certainly of John. His most accepted dates are 115 AD – 181 AD

In Book One of Theophilus to Autolytus, his first trinity teaching is outlined:

“Entrust yourself to the Physician, and He will couch the eyes of your soul and of your heart. Who is the Physician? God, who heals and makes alive through His word and wisdom. God by His own word and wisdom made all things; for by His word were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. Most excellent is His wisdom. By His wisdom God founded the earth; and by knowledge He prepared the heavens; and by understanding were the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the clouds poured out their dews.

The earlier scriptural reference Theophilus points us towards is Psalm 33:4-6:

4 For the word of the Lord is right, And all His work is done in truth. 5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. 6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

In the second book from Theophilus to Autolytus, in Chapter 15, commenting on the “Fourth Day” of Creation, we have the first known recording of the word “Trinity,” the light and man being Jesus.

“In like manner also the three days which were before the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God, and His Word, and His wisdom. And the fourth is the type of man, who needs light, that so there may be God, the Word, wisdom, man. Wherefore also on the fourth day the lights were made. The disposition of the stars, too, contains a type of the arrangement and order of the righteous and pious, and of those who keep the law and commandments of God. For the brilliant and bright stars are an imitation of the prophets, and therefore they remain fixed, not declining, nor passing from place to place. And those which hold the second place in brightness, are types of the people of the righteous. And those, again, which change their position, and flee from place to place, which also are called planets, they too are a type of the men who have wandered from God, abandoning His law and commandments.”

The Greek word Τριάδα or Trinity is naturally used in the text. This implies that Theophilus was quite at ease writing about this and that this was no new conception he was concocting. We know Ignatius and Justyn Martyr linked all three together before Theophilus and described essentially the Trinity, but never did they use this neat and tidy word that from henceforth seems to have caused so much confusion.

Image of God

Now we have got that out the way and firmly established the historic, and always to be expected, three-fold understanding of the Godhead, we will look at what it means to say we are made in the Image of God. It is always worth remembering that this “contrived” Trinity was well-established even before the arrival of Jesus and during the Ministry of Jesus, as reported by the Gospel testimonies and other New Testament books. All of this is confirmed in their understanding of the Trinity by the majority of the early Church. In our understanding of the Image of God, I think here lies a richer understanding of the Trinity.

In three places Genesis lays out that we are made in the image (likeness) of God. In the first passage quoted, the word God is in the plural version and He speaks as two persons or more, underscoring the multiple facets of the Godhead.

Genesis 1:26-28

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **27** So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28** Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

It is crucial to note that 'image' is one thing and 'likeness' another: this will be explained later in this chapter

Genesis 5:1-3

1 This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. **2** He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. **3** And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

Genesis 9:6

"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

A Digression on Love

I am going to also draw out the Trinitarian understanding that must exist when people say "God is Love," and how this relates to the understanding of the Image of God and our Creation (how God did this, via what method, is not the subject matter of this book). Our conception of God as the perfect Being containing all the positive predicates, must imply that love be contained within this thought. To have an ability to love, you must have something to love. The Godhead always had the second part of the Trinity at least, to love and vice versa. However, a greater love is not just mutual love, but the dynamic of loving another, so we must have a third part to the triune Godhead. Now, following this reasoning, it is tempting for the Godhead could go on and create endless aspects of it to love, multiple Jesus' and multiple Holy Spirits, but what if any extra value is there to this? I think none at all. In scripture

we only ever see three aspects of this Godhead. As we see from the above quotes, the act of Creation is a plurally inspired event. This was a loved-filled event. It was not a necessary event as it was a freely willed event of the Godhead, but it also needed to happen. It needed to happen as a greater love is loving others, uniquely and not just another part of you. We are all unique parts of this great love story.

Back to the Image of God

So the love of God drives that desire to create us in His Image. This does not imply a perfect copy - we are not God, but like God in what it means to be a human. Neither does likeness imply a perfect copy, both being very close to the original, but not the original. Concerning likeness, as we go through our lives and sin, we depart from our likeness to God, but our image still stays the same. If we follow Jesus, we can retain as much of that likeness as possible. Clement of Alexandria at the close of the 2nd and opening of the 3rd Century reminds us at the very end of his Exhortation to the Heathen:

It is time, then, for us to say that the pious Christian alone is rich and wise, and of noble birth, and thus call and believe him to be God's image, and also His likeness, having become righteous and holy and wise by Jesus Christ, and so far already like God.

Much ink has been spilled over subsequent centuries concerning this understanding of mankind being made in the Image of God, and its relationship to the Trinity, though none of it quite hits the bullseye as far as I can see. One notable exception comes from Cardinal Cusa. He shows us the way, in his book two, The Scrutiny of the Koran (Cribatio Alkoran). Here I find a very informative discussion of the Trinity and how it is expressed in mankind (the Image of God) and indeed, as a side point to this book, why it is prevalent in the Qur'an. This chapter of my book will not address the latter, although I would like to point out that, as with the Jewish Bible, the Qur'an itself is replete with the Trinity.

Cardinal Cusa reasons that we know that the universe could exist in another form: slightly bigger, slightly smaller and so on and so forth. We have no evidence whatsoever that it has ever existed in a form other than that which we observe. Therefore, it does not exist for itself

because if it did it would exist before it existed. It has come from the Beginning which is prior to the Creation, but uncreated. It seems plain to me that we know this must be the case, as all material causes must have a prior material cause and without that start point there could never be anything material. If there was an infinite series of a regression of causes, or no original cause, then nothing at all would have caused the material things to exist. Nothing can't cause anything at all! There must have been a prior cause for what we observe to exist. Therefore, you can only conclude a prior immaterial cause as causing the first material cause to get our physical existence up and running. If there is no prior cause, there is no materiality at all, and the fact that at least you and I exist disproves such a conjecture. Try to divorce the material world from any cause by arguing an endless set of prior causes and you kill the material world: it can never start. The Beginning has always been free to create, just as our intellect or mind is, with regards to its own operations. Like the Creator at the beginning, our minds are the poor image of this creative capability.

Cusa continues by suggesting that when the intellect is at work it must have:

1. Reflection or comprehension of that which it is thinking about.
2. It must have knowledge, or know-how, of what it is thinking about in order to know that it is thinking about it.
3. It must have a will to keep it thinking and doing.

Cusa uses the example of an artist to illustrate this thought process. An artist can't paint without an understanding of, or comprehension concerning what is being painted. The artist must have a knowledge or know-how of how to paint. And there must be the will to paint. Reflection or comprehension, know-how or knowledge and will are all part of the same essence of the one unifying form of the intellect. Here, he establishes the Triune Mind.

Cusa then goes on to reason that knowledge is begotten from comprehension or reflection and if you don't apply reflection in your mind on the object of thought, you don't have knowledge. There is no will in the absence of all of the preceding parts of the process. There is a oneness to thought - it's all part of the intellect. Although they can't be separated, you can think of them, like the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in isolation. Comprehension of the

comprehended is just that. Knowledge of the known is knowledge. The will is that which is willed.

Cusa then uses another example to illustrate this, that of the farmer. The farmer planting his seed understands and has comprehension or reflection in his mind's eye understanding of the seed. There is knowledge of how to plant, and a will to plant. The series of processes starts and finishes that way. One proceeds from the other. There is one essence and there are three operations.

Together synthesizing in the Godhead, the great all-encompassing intellect, know-how or Wisdom itself, is the Father's Son, through whom the father makes all things. The Will which does the making, proceeds from both the Father and the Son, so we then have the Holy Spirit that perfects all things. Our likeness to the creator is observed in our intellect which is a mirror (with imperfections, needless to add) image of the Creator. Just as our intellect is un-divided, so is the Creator's. There is one essence and there are three operations.

I consider in the artists of this world and the entrepreneurs the best and most imperfect embodiment of the Trinity when they freely create their enterprises or artworks. In the case of entrepreneurs, it is the ideas they have for new goods and services, created out of nothing, that, with their savings and maybe those of others, they mix with the existing factors of production into better combinations so as to make better things for you and me and the rest of humanity over time. In this, they are directly aping the Creator. They are in His Image. Concerning the artists, be they poets, story-tellers, sculptors or painters, when you read their books and marvel at their galleries of work, you get a glimpse of their minds and that creative trifold thought process at work. They, too, are in His Image.

Paradoxically, Dawkins seems to be aware that idea (comprehension) and reason (wisdom or knowledge) and action (will) are three distinct things but all part of the one mind. In all his bluster and rhetoric, he does not seem to notice that right under his own nose, buttoned up under his own skin, he demonstrates his triune self, that lowly and imperfect image of God, as we all are, at its best when commenting on the Trinity:

“Ideas must be distinct before reason can act upon them; and no man ever had a distinct idea of the trinity. It is the mere Abracadabra of the mountebanks calling themselves the priests of Jesus.”

I hope that by understanding the Trinitarian timeline, it will help clear up any misunderstandings of the mystery of the Trinity. From the dawn of creation that great act of free will, of God, enabling us to manifest a greater love to others, to its embodiment in all our minds as part of the Image of God, our understanding of the Trinity might emerge as completely and totally coherent as possible.