

## *A Temporal and Timeless God:*

### **How Multiple Divine Persons Can Reconcile Libertarian Free Will, Divine Foreknowledge, and Divine Agency**

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#### **Abstract**

Libertarian free will and divine foreknowledge at first seem incompatible. Are humans in charge of their own destiny if God knows human agents' free choices? We also have the related issue of God's agency concerning foreknowledge of human events. Can God escape divine fatalism and interact with us meaningfully if he knows how humans will act in the future?

There are ways to reconcile the three, but one proposal is to utilize the concept of separate divine persons. What if there are two persons, with their difference that one is in time and one outside it? Through an exploration of this potential model one can see how foreknowledge, free will, and agency might fit together.

#### **Introduction**

When describing the relationship between God and man, libertarian free will and God's foreknowledge are difficult to reconcile. How can God knowing the future coexist with human agents' free choices? Things are further complicated if we wish to support divine agency and the

image of God responding to these choices. If God knows what will happen through foreknowledge, does God have agency to align future events with his goals? We appear to be stuck with a trilemma, where God can support two of libertarian free will, foreknowledge, and divine agency, but not all three.

I propose one such method, which utilizes the concept of divine personhood. What if there exist have two divine persons, with the difference between them that one is in time, subject to the flow and experience of time, and one is outside time? One person would be above all, knowing in one instant the full thought of everything that we ever experience. To this person we could ascribe the qualities of omniscience and any other related fundamental, timeless properties. A second divine person, by contrast, would be subject to the flow of time. With this person, we would get a God who we can say possesses agency to do what he sees fit, and who can perform actions such as governing the universe, addressing prayers, responding to our choices, and any other time related interactions that arise.

There are a number of items to work through when addressing such a theory's feasibility. First though, let's start with the exact definitions.

## **Definitions**

Pondering free will, when referring to temporal entities such as humans, I will assume freedom according to an incompatibilist perspective. We might, for a considered action, simultaneously either enact or not enact it. It could be agent-caused, event-caused, or in some other form, as long as this truth holds. I will call this freedom libertarian for now because of this union of incompatibilism and free will, although we will revisit this definition later on.

However, this may not be what is happening from another point of view, such as God regarding man's thoughts and deeds. For example, God might order the universe a certain way, and through his foreknowledge know what we will do in any given situation. Perhaps there are

compatibilist frameworks where divine and human choices both support human free will, but we may want a cleaner separation of responsibility. Thus, this paper will aim for a libertarian perspective. Yet, while from our perspective our will is free enough, can we really call this God-influenced will libertarian?

I will maintain we possess libertarian will through a specific definition of a timeless God. This God sees all of the universe as one present thought. However, I will also say that this thought and state for God are fundamental, and that in his timeless state it cannot be changed. Thus, while God in his timeless thought can see our deliberations and what we are thinking, he cannot in this person compel us to do otherwise. Our free will, as part of this divine thought and state of being, is also fundamental.

This line of reasoning may suggest pantheistic equivalences of God and the universe. However, I aim for Abrahamic or panentheistic conceptions where at least part of God is not equivalent to the universe. God in these models will not just be an infinite source of the universe's properties, but similar to us in capacity of reason and will. Humans in a sense reflect God's image, although we can leave open the exact definition of image. Thus, our timeless God thinks his one fundamental thought while retaining other anthropomorphic capacities.

We could put forward other timeless modes where, for example, God thinks about what he wants the universe to be in his own time stream. He deliberates and eventually decides what he wants to come to pass. When he reaches his final decision, he will then create the universe and the creatures within it. This is not the timeless God I am considering as he could determine ahead of time how we behave. It does not yield new insights into our questions. Thus, the only thought my timeless God thinks is coexistent with his decision affirming the thought, and both do not change.

However, with such a definition of a timeless God, we run into another problem. Can such a timeless God really do anything on his own? This highlights a problem of divine agency, asking whether we can say whether God in fact does anything, or whether he just sits there as a source from which all things are derived. Would God fatalistically see all of the universe in one moment,

in an eternal present, but not be able to change what he sees? Perhaps, but only if we insist that all of God remain timeless. This is where a temporal divine person enters the picture, who can avoid fatalism and act to follow his desires. This temporal person might know the future or he might not. Either way, he will not interfere in our free will to maintain its libertarian state, but he permits himself to do whatever else he might require.

In short, for any temporal event, this model supports a maximum of one time-bound agent enacting it. The agent could be human or the temporal deity. The atemporal person may in some sense cause events too, but if so, this causation is fixed and fatalistic.

### **High Level Generalities**

These definitions should help, but it can be hard to visualize what exactly I am proposing. Free will, foreknowledge, the nature of God, and his relationship to the universe are large enough topics. What do divine persons add?

We will discuss later how these two persons might fit into existing Christian Trinitarian models. For now, we can just note that the persons of this proposal can share the same substance, perichoresis, or any other traits desired if one can support the consequences. This shared nature may just include a least common denominator where these two divine persons are not aware of each other. For our purposes, one person just experiences a timeless thought, and another person manifests that same divine thought in temporal succession. The model supports further additions and trait sharing if desired for other theological goals, but these are optional.

This God still supports theistic divine attributes, at least from an empiric, anthropocentric perspective. He has the same motivations and plan, whether in temporal or timeless form. These are not two polytheistic deities each with their own agendas. God can act as he pleases in his temporal form, both when governing the universe and, if we extend time outside of the universe, before and after it. God is omniscient in his timeless form. We might wish foreknowledge and

agency to always blend in God's mind, but if for some reason they do not, from our frame of reference we just experience God acting in the universe. From an empiric point of view our model allows God to behave as he would in other forms of theism.

As an analogy, let us consider a sheet of music. God is the musician, but depending on his relationship to time he has two different ways to "play" this music. If he is timeless, he can look at the sheet of music, process it atemporally and never otherwise, and manifest the music all at once but aligned with time's flow. If he by contrast is bound temporally, he can progress through the notes in sync with the arrow of time, playing notes at some points while resting at others. A temporal and timeless player need not be aware of the other, as each can manifest the music independently with the same result. They can share the same underlying nature, however defined, so that they would play the music in the same manner whether bound temporally or atemporally. Yet how they are playing and what they regard while doing so are not the same.

There are advantages to such an approach with our libertarian free will / foreknowledge / divine agency trilemma, at least with a first pass. Can we choose between two different choices without God choosing for us? Yes for the temporal God, but no for the timeless God. Does God have foreknowledge? For God outside time, yes, but not necessarily for God in time. Does God have multiple-choice agency? Atemporally no, but temporally he can do what he wants.

This may be academic if we want a God exactly us who can handle the whole trilemma temporally while paralleling our experience of time. However, perhaps we are anthropomorphizing too much. Using our earlier example, we may desire a relationship with both the temporal and timeless musician. Neither would have all the divine attributes we might desire, and if a relationship with just one musician our experience might suffer. Yet we need not choose. We can desire a relationship with all persons of God, and the same constant divine nature that underlies them both. By just focusing on one person we can too easily get caught in false dilemmas.

This sword can cut through many knots if one is willing to accept the consequences. Should we be concerned with, as Pike notes, humanity's seeming inability to go against what an omniscient

God believes regarding coming events (1965)? If we agree, we might be stuck in a timeless sense but not temporally, which may be good enough if our day-to-day interactions are with a temporal God lacking foreknowledge. We could also avoid some tradeoffs with models such as Hartshorne's Dipolar Theism. There exist similarities, in that his panentheistic God might parallel our fundamental divine thought. However, his view of omniscient foreknowledge requires a level of indeterminism (Viney & Shields). We can go further by saying God in one part of his being "knows" the future, but it need not affect our day to day interaction with another part of God through our free choices.

One can follow these patterns through through other proposals concerning the trilemma. As a general pattern though, if a trait concerns metaphysical bases underlying will and foreknowledge, assign it to the timeless God. If it has to do with the give and take of a person-to-deity relationship, assign it to the temporal. We can have our cake and eat it too if we are willing to view things in a certain light, not insisting that all of God experience every divine attribute at once. We can have a back-and-forth relationship where humans have agency with one part of God, while fatalistically following a script with another.

The remainder of this paper will expound on trilemma points and the persons' natures. We will first discuss divine agency through fatalist traps and temporal-person consistency checks. We will then note why we should call human will in such a model libertarian. We will next touch on how the model might fit within conceptions of divine foreknowledge, while remaining agnostic as to which, if any, is correct. Finally, we will discuss how the persons fit into existing Trinitarian models.

### **Timelessness and Fatalism**

It is tempting to just say that God is a timeless being, somehow above time, and that this helps with foreknowledge. However, how could an atemporal God possess knowledge of a changing environment, and how can God interface with humans and our actions (Kane, 2005, 153)?

One might plump for something like the ET-simultaneity of Stump and Kretzmann (1981), where eternal events can cause temporal events and vice versa. Yet there are dangers with explaining timeless agency through ET-simultaneity and other methods entirely.

Perhaps God exists, and is an entity that thinks one thought consisting of all of space and time. Perhaps he has some other relationship to space and time, but still sees all instances of them as one eternal moment. But if this all he does, there is a danger that such a God may lack power over our lives. He may not be able to do good or prevent evil, or respond to prayers and petitions. He may lack agency within the timeless "thought" that he is thinking.

To illustrate the problem, imagine that someone (say, "Mark") has witnessed a murder. Mark cannot escape the horror of the event, and replays the event over and over in his head. These thoughts haunt Mark, and he keeps thinking that if he could go back in time and perform any steps necessary to prevent the loss of life, he would. However, what if God was in Mark's situation? God could be a moral being, and wishes to prevent evil if he can. However, he can only think one thought, the thought that encompasses space and time. God in this thought sees and experiences countless killings, and perhaps somewhere in this thought he deplors them. But as a being not subject to the flow of time, he has no power to change the outcome. We might say such a thought is inconsistent with God's nature, and thus it is inconsistent for a timeless God to even think it. However, such a situation is conceivable, so I am not sure how much we can rely on the inconsistency.

To mitigate the above scenario, we can always add elements of thought to the timeless God that are separate from what we experience. For example, we might state that God is in his own time stream, but is somehow separate from ours. Another of Padgett's is that God is omnitemporal, in that while God is separate from our time, he experiences it somehow within himself and who he is. We might even follow Craig and propose that God once was outside of time and became temporal upon creation of the universe, although this scenario seemingly requires the ability to convert from one mode to the other (Ganssle n.d.).

There is thus room for divine agency in scenarios like these, but while possible, they rely on extra elements we attribute to God that are not strictly necessary to the minimum requirements of our experience. We need extra features, such as hypothesized extra time streams, whether internal or external to God, or the ability to convert from timeless to temporal. The advantage of our separate divine personhood scenario is that we can take things as they are, assigning potentially contradictory experiences either to the temporal or the timeless being. Our model's temporal God through his agency would never permit our murder scenario. Thus at least one person of God is providing validation and consistency checks, and we need not only rely on timeless coincidence.

We still, however, have the temporal God also influencing events. One may thus fear that a temporal God would not be much better in avoiding fatalism. Perhaps he also lacks agency to do otherwise. However, this is not the right way to regard our model. God in any time stream will act according to his will. He still has full power to do anything he desires as long as he has time in which to work. The temporal God is not limited.

One might also object that divine personhood is also an extra "feature". Yet, without getting too attached to labels, I'm not trying to add extra properties to say temporal and timeless mental experiences have to be experienced at once. We can assign the experiences to the separate buckets that will take them, without hypothesizing extra ways to combine them.

### **How This Free Will is Libertarian**

After clarifying God's agency, we can now focus on how human freedom can remain libertarian. There may be features in the arrow of time that allow free will to seem libertarian, but there are concerns if the path of all things is fixed at a timeless level. How does our dual nature of God address incompatibilist free will propositions?

We will start by assuming a leeway incompatibilist conception of free will. In this



conception, we start from the viewpoint of the actions themselves, whether an action could or could not have been enacted. This might be in contrast to, say source incompatibilism, where we start from the source and ask whether the agent could or could not have made a specific choice (Timpe). Because of our model's ontological overlap of humans with God, where humans are derived from God's timeless base, it is not easy and perhaps impossible to disentangle the two. Thus we will focus on actions themselves, and how our free will supports leeway incompatibilism.

Let us take three propositions of van Inwagen's concerning free will in general as an example of how this framework can help:

1. "We are sometimes in the following position with respect to a contemplated future act: we simultaneously have both the following abilities: the ability to perform that act and the ability to refrain from performing that act."
2. "The past and the laws of nature together determine, at every moment, a unique future."
3. "Necessarily: If one is contemplating some possible future act, and if the past and the laws of nature do *not* together determine that one shall perform that act, then one is unable to perform that act."

He argues that (1) and (2) are opposed because of the Consequence Argument. (3) is true because of the Mind Argument: where if not affirming determinism one must affirm indeterminism and the unknowability of results. (2) and (3) together both being true would seem to rule out (1) entirely. Thus, the concept of agents choosing otherwise seems questionable (van Inwagen 2008).

All of this appears valid if we regard everything from one perspective, in time's flow. Yet, if we mix and match perspectives of time, with some of the propositions regarded from within time and others from without, we arrive at different results. For example, (1) may be true from a temporal perspective, if we think of ourselves as constant agents who manipulate actions contingent on our will. However, atemporally this assumed contingency is less assured. Why would we

assume that the agents in any way "cause" the events? Why would we not instead say the events "cause" the agents? Other perspectives are also valid, in that the surrounding environment might "cause" both. Any such classification seems arbitrary.

Thus I see no reason to affirm (1) from an atemporal perspective. Things just are what they are. The raw material of events, agents, and the surrounding environment has similarities which we can artificially group into agents, events, and the surrounding environment. Yet saying one of these groupings could change another grouping does not make sense, as each grouping is equally fundamental. Similar issues exist with (2) and (3). The past determining a unique feature through natural law, or saying an agent cannot perform the action, is an arbitrary correlation. We might see patterns, but nothing is stopping aberrances and deviations at a fundamental level.

All of this might be true, yet is it really useful? The dilemmas are in the patterns themselves, and we must work within the patterns if we are to discern order in the universe. However, there is danger in conflating the patterns with the fundamental order of the universe. Just because a pattern does not hold from one viewpoint does not make the universe fundamentally indeterministic. Take, for example, combining (2) and (3). We might think that the past and natural law would force an agent to enact event  $E_1$ . However, if an agent decides for a different event  $E_2$  instead, and  $E_2$  occurs, perhaps things are indeterministic in the arrow of time. Yet, this is not necessarily true from a timeless viewpoint.

We can take the easy way out and say that any groupings of events are arbitrary from a timeless viewpoint. Yet we can justify more, and broadly affirm the patterns even if we allow for a few discrepancies like  $E_2$  instead of  $E_1$  that follow different patterns. Just thinking atemporally alone we cannot, as things are what they are. However, if we expound upon the atemporal viewpoint, adding other attributes, we can ascribe fundamentality to the patterns. The trick is just determining what else would bring the necessary order.

I propose that a temporal God is one addition to the atemporal viewpoint that brings this order. His agency is one element that could fundamentally align the disparate patterns as time

flows. This agency through natural law can uphold patterned events unwilled by any other agents. It can also undergird yet stay separate from the processes of free will that allows either  $E_1$  or  $E_2$  to occur depending on the whims of a human agent. By considering all viewpoints, we can see how other conflicting patterns might arise.

Thus, free will can be compatibilist from a timeless viewpoint, and incompatibilist for those experiencing the same events within the arrow of time. A static timeless God and pattern-promoting temporal God allow both viewpoints to be equally true. We can always appeal to the other viewpoint; they are two sides of the same coin.

### **Further Free Will Observations**

This line of reasoning is not necessarily new. Leftow (1991) noted that metaphysical necessities do not preclude agency and compared timeless knowledge to knowledge of another time sequence. Green and Rogers (2012) point out how isotemporalism can coexist with free will, discussing how an action can be free in a libertarian sense even though there are ways of regarding the results of a choice outside of time. Such arguments also fit in this model, with the model potentially providing more support for other parts of the trilemma.

We do, however, need some model, even if not our own, to address other concerns. Further issues are related to the chaos and unpredictability that truly libertarian free will might entail. Questions include whether a multitude of will-caused seemingly indeterministic actions aesthetically resemble randomness and chance, especially if every choice we might make in our lives requires this. The system might be consistent, but such a multitude might lead to absurdity with respect to the whole system (Kane, 2005, 37-47).

Fortunately, our model can address randomness through timeless fundamentality. It affirms libertarianism through an atemporal base without temporal-person interference. We wouldn't have to worry about wills and parts of thought entailing from those wills randomly manifesting

themselves. If the will and mental processes were somehow based in our model, then we can tie them into a divine timeless thought and say they could not be otherwise.

### **Foreknowledge vs. Freedom: Enhancements to Existing Theories**

Now we pivot to another question: foreknowledge vs. freedom. On a first pass we can always substitute "determinism" in the free will discussion for "foreknowledge", and many of the same points hold. The timeless God will know the future, and the temporal God will experience agency. This might be enough if we only cared about our anthropocentric viewpoint where we just want some part of God to know the future. Yet we might desire a more useful foreknowledge, one in which God can act on what he knows.

Since our timeless God lacks full agency, we cannot rely on timeless answers like ET-simultaneity, and thus must ask how a temporal God can combine agency and foreknowledge. He may be out of luck if he, according to our least common denominator, is not aware of the timeless person. He cannot use his agency with the timeless person's knowledge of the future. Our model thus has room for a robust treatment of foreknowledge as the temporal God would understand it.

There are many historical and contemporary ways to reconcile foreknowledge and free will. This paper will remain agnostic as to whether one of these approaches is correct, if any. Yet if true, the timeless / temporal framework offers support to address potential metaphysical issues, as shown in the following brief, non-exhaustive survey.

Some initial answers are traditional ones. One such is Molinism, emphasizing middle knowledge. In this, God would have knowledge of what every human would do, given any situation we might find ourselves in, yet we would still possess libertarian free will to decide those things for ourselves. However, one objection is whether this truly supports libertarian free will, concerning whether man could really go against this middle knowledge (Rissler n.d.). I do not want

to focus too much on middle knowledge. If somehow valid for libertarian free will, this form of knowledge provides all the separation needed between foreknowledge and free will, so not much is gained from our framework.

Another divine foreknowledge solution is William of Ockham's and others' division of this knowledge into "soft" and "hard" facts. "Hard" facts could be ones about occurring completely in the past, presumably unchangeable, but not "soft" facts, concerning future events. Human future actions wouldn't necessarily deviate from God's past beliefs, so humans couldn't do anything to falsify past divine beliefs (Zagzebski 2017).

Yet another way for God to know the future is for God to act and compel as needed regardless of any particular willed human activity. One can belittle the Principle of Alternate Possibilities, as discussed in the papers of Harry Frankfurt. Say a human could make two choices in a given situation, choice 1 or choice 2. Now let us say another actor, who has power over the human, allows the human to choose choice 1 whenever the human willfully decides to choose 1. Yet, if the human instead would choose choice 2, the actor intervenes to make the actor choose choice 1. For these examples, choice 1 would always occur, yet the human could still arguably make an independent choice (Zagzebski 2017).

These proposals, and others like them, may or may not be plausible, but if true, what is the temporal God's perspective? It is possible God knows a few one-off future facts. For example, he might know the journey and not the destination, such as that the world will end but not how. Perhaps the overlap of his knowledge with the timeless God's knowledge allows for a few future facts to be shared, and we must accept it as being what it is, even if the facts shared are arbitrary and do not fit a pattern. However, while this option is admittedly open, we might want a more systematic answer.

The temporal God likely needs some relationship to time different from ours if knowing the entire future without middle knowledge. How else will he know something will definitely occur in the future, as it is hard to see how soft facts and anti-PAP might work from our exact temporal

perspective? We could postulate some special interactions inside God's being and essence, but to accommodate a time-bound God with a nature familiar to us, we might tweak our model to say God is not fully on our time stream. Perhaps he experiences our future before we experience it, and the past after we experience the past. Or, with the anti-PAP Frankfurt example, perhaps he has a few extra milliseconds in which he can interpret how we would behave and then compel or allow us to proceed accordingly. These may be feasible, but separate time streams may seem too arbitrary, as one wonders how another time stream could both arise and flow in a different direction if based on another time stream. Fortunately, we could always say a timeless God undergirds both time streams.

To reiterate, division into temporal and timeless persons will not tell us the exact mechanism of coexisting free will and foreknowledge. If the temporal God, like the timeless God, possesses foreknowledge, he might rely on Molinism, soft facts, anti-PAP, or something else. We can be agnostic on the particulars. However, our model potentially shed light on metaphysical riddles underlying certain foreknowledge theories. This is a nice bonus to the model's primary goal of supporting the trilemma.

### **Modalism, Bi-Theism, or Binity?**

Before closing, we may need to revisit our picture of God that we've sketched out so far. We've explored potential traits, but why might we consider these beings one God with two separate persons? While this discussion neither excludes nor requires Christian theology, discussions on the Christian Trinity can apply here for our "binity". We need to avoid the traps of bi-theism, with each person a God, in addition to modalism, where we are just dealing with modes of one God. The following is a sketch of how our model could fit into different Trinitarian conceptions.

For our first mode, we can follow Leftow (2004), who analogizes a potential "Latin Trinity" to a Rockette dancer line. Perhaps there is single entity (a dancer named Jane) who through time travel is able to be multiple dancers in our present. There is one Jane on her timeline, but her

timeline touches ours at multiple points. We can extend the analogy to a timeless God, if desired, positing a causal relation analogous to Jane jumping forward in time.

Extending to our two persons, the timeless deity through his single thought may "cause" our temporal God. Depending on whether this causing transfers foreknowledge, the temporal God could match an early Jane not knowing future events or a later Jane knowing actions of the other Janes. Whether foreknowledge is transferred or not, the one-way static timeless causation lessens bi-theism charges, as we do not have two distinct wills talking to each other. Further, different experiences of time lessen modalism charges as we cannot combine the atemporal and temporal into one perspective. Potential limitations on timeless-God omnipotence and temporal-God omniscience also contribute in differentiating the perspectives.

If not favoring Latin models, we might use a Social Trinitarian one starting from the interrelatedness of separate divine persons and relationships and focusing on how they are one deity (Leftow 2010). For example, our temporal and timeless God may have separate wills instead of potentially one will, not causally linked, and have more Social than Latin relationships. The causality relationship between timeless and temporal may be less clear, but this covers more panentheistic situations where disentangling which person comes first is difficult. The two divine wills, along with differing views of time, may just manifest independently. This clean separation minimalizes modalism at least.

We will not delve too deeply into criticisms Social models invite, but if our binity is social, we can sidestep one concern. For example, Leftow questions what a divine person not knowing every existing fact says about omniscience (2010). This particular criticism arguably does not apply in our case, as we have at least one omniscient timeless person, and the other can follow biblical examples where one person does not know all (Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32 NIV). Each person can maximally manifest different divine attributes.

As for charges of bi-theism, if avoiding the Latin option, and if two separate wills are problematic, what else can we work with? Binity divisions abjuring wills are less helpful as we

posit different experiences of agency and perhaps foreknowledge. Wills are a nice proxy for this separation, although it is possible an adjacent division fits best.

However we divide the shared and personal traits, including wills, we might follow Aquinas on another topic as he affirms the separation between existence and essence, where one can comprehend items that may or may not occur (Nelson 2020). The temporal person may lack freedom if we think of the persons' wills as having different essences that need communication to align their actions, as might be the case with two different polytheistic gods. However, it is better to regard these wills as two existences of the same divine will essence. These existences do not need communication to align their desires. There is a difference between the existences in that just one is temporally bound, perhaps lacking foreknowledge, but they otherwise align. Each person is thus unconstrained while playing the same sheet of music.

This analogy supports Social models in that wills might be duplicated in multiple existences. It also supports Latin models as communication between the persons is optional. However divided, one should note that this existence / essence analogy smooths over any concerns that we are just pushing the trilemma up a level, leaving us to deal with it at the level of divine persons. Even if the timeless God possesses foreknowledge of the temporal God's plans, the temporal God's agency is still libertarian. Vice versa also applies in whatever sense the timeless God acts atemporally. If they were two separate deities with different essences, it might be possible for one person to lack agency as this entity is forced to do what a being of a different essence desires. Yet, for a given context, the timeless God will never desire one thing and the temporal god something else. They will always desire the same thing because they share the same essence.

Whether binity model best fits, I wish to note a potential temptation when positing wills for the persons. "If separate wills, then we must have bi-theism, even if they share every other trait. If a single will, then we must have modalism, as any other trait division between the persons is just an arbitrary grouping, or mode." If something is to thread the needle, we must be charitable and posit that some traits can be shared by different persons of one God. Temporal and foreknowledge



experiences might be two such.

## Conclusion

Libertarian free will, divine foreknowledge, and divine agency at first appear incompatible. However, we should fully consider God's nature when combining the three. Using our model of divine personhood, we can assign timelessness and temporality to each of two separate persons. One person would be timeless, handling fundamental necessities. Another would experience time, manifesting time's arrow and allowing for divine agency with a give and take between free human partners.

This model is only one hypothesis of many. However, even if preferring another, we should challenge any implicit assumption that God regards each trilemma point simultaneously. Just as one might say the universe is what it is when describing some strange anthropic theory or coincidence, we can apply the same approach to God. We may just have to accept a little complexity. Our separate divine personhood scenario at a high level smooths over trilemma concerns, and thus should be a strong contender for God's ontology.

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