By now, of course, Verificationism has retreated into the obscurity it so richly deserves; but the moral remains. This hand wringing and those attempts to accom- modate the positivist were wholly inappropriate. I realize that hindsight is clearer than foresight and I do not recount this bit of recent intellectual history in order to be critical of my elders or to claim that we are wiser than our fathers: what I want to point out is that we can *learn* something from the whole nasty incident. For Christian philosophers should have adopted a quite different attitude towards positivism and its verifiability criterion. What they should have said to the positivists is: "Your critierion is mistaken: for such statements as 'God loves us' and 'God created the heavens and the earth' are clearly meaningful; so if they aren't verifiable in your sense, then it is false that all and only statements verifiable in that sense are meaningful." What was needed here was less accommodation to current fashion and more Christian self-confidence: Christian theism is true; if Christian theism is true, then the verifiability criterion is false; so the verifiability criterion is false. Of course, if the verificationists had given cogent *arguments* for their criterion, from premises that had some legitimate claim on Christian or theis- tic thinkers, then perhaps there would have been a problem here for the Christian philosopher; then we would have been obliged either to agree that Christian theism is cognitively meaningless, or else revise or reject those premises. But the Ver- ificationists never gave any cogent arguments; indeed, they seldom gave any argu- ments at all. Some simply trumpeted this principle as a great discovery, and when challenged, repeated it loudly and slowly; but why should *that* disturb anyone? Others proposed it as a *definition-a* definition of the term "meaningful." Now of course the positivists had a right to use this term in any way they chose; it's a free country. But how could their decision to use that term in a particular way show anything so momentous as that all those who took themselves to be believers in God were wholly deluded? If I propose to use the term 'Democrat' to mean 'un-mitigated scoundrel,' would it follow that Democrats everywhere should hang their heads in shame? And my point, to repeat myself, is that Christian philosophers should have displayed more integrity, more independence, less read- iness to trim their sails to the prevailing philosophical winds of doctrine, and more Christian self-confidence.

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