

**L: My soul magnifies the Lord,**

**R: And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,**

**L: For God has looked with favor on  
the depressed state of Their servant.**

**R: Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed.**

**L: For the Mighty One has done magnificent things for me,  
and holy is Their name.**

**R: God's mercy is for those  
who revere Them from generation to generation.**

**L: God has shown strength with Their arm;**

**R: God has scattered the proud  
in the thoughts of their hearts.**

**L: God has brought down the powerful from their thrones,**

**R: God has lifted up the depressed;**

**L: God has filled the hungry with good things,**

**R: God has sent the rich away empty.**

**ALL: God has helped Their servant Israel,  
in remembrance of Their mercy,  
according to the promise God made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.**

**Why did Jesus come?**

Jesus became flesh and blood so that through death he might **destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,** and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. **Hebrews 2:14-15**

The Son of God was revealed for this purpose, to **destroy the works of the devil."** **1 John 3:8**

**The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.** I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." **John 10:10**

Many times when we hear about why Jesus came, we hear something about God being able to forgive sin. But God has always been able to forgive sin. The cross was not about giving God the power of forgiveness, some power that God lacked until Jesus died. No, God came in the person of Jesus not to figure out a way to forgive you; but to show us what God has always been like; and to be swallowed up by Death, so that Jesus could render it powerless from the inside.

In magnificent language—

God shows mercy to everyone,  
from one generation to the next. **Luke 1:50**

How does God show mercy? Or, why did Jesus come?

To **pull down** the powerful from their thrones.  
To **send** the rich away without riches.  
To **fill** up the hungry.  
To **lift** up the low.

It is *\*merciful\** to remove Power and Riches from the Powerful and the Rich because, Scripture makes clear, Power and Riches are a corrupting disease.

In fact, Power and Riches are such a corrupting disease that they will trick you into thinking that they are good for you. Like a lung disease patient thinking that one more cigarette might be the cure to their coughing.

It would therefore be merciful for God to remove the corruption from us — even corruption that we misperceive as good — so that we might be have clear minds once again.

Okay, I know pastors aren't supposed to geek out on Greek with their congregations, but I must.



καθαίρω  
Kathaireo  
kah-THAR-ee-oh

The majority of the time it's used in the New Testament (5/9 times), as well as in other ancient literature it has a technical use:

\*To be take a body down from a cross\*

Now listen to Mary's prophecy:

God has *kathaireo* (taken down)  
rulers from their thrones.  
**Luke 1:52**

It is an act of God's mercy to take rulers down from their thrones. For two reasons. One: It is mercy to those who have been oppressed or marginalized by those in positions of authority. Those who monopolize power and money. Those who create systems of white supremacy and hoard wealth. Those who profit from pandemics. Who refuse to give fair pay or access to health care. Yes, take them down from their thrones. The world is better off without them there.

And two: it is a mercy \*to those on the thrones\*, because being in power over others is kinda like being nailed to a cross. If you find yourself on a throne, in a position of authority and wealth, then I should warn you that that sort of monopolizing, individualistic power-over-others will slowly leech the life out of you; it will sabotage your brain into believing that its corrupting, corrosive power is somehow good for you. And the only merciful thing that God can do for you is to \*kathaireo\* you down, to take you down, to de-crucify you from the Power and Wealth you've been nailed onto, and begin the restoration and healing process your body and soul will need.

Now, Anthony. That's pretty darn political. Well, good news. I have a new Bible translation for you. The Anti Critical Theory (ACT) Bible.



## Anti-Critical Theory (ACT)<sup>®</sup> Translation

The ACT Bible<sup>®</sup> is a new translation that seeks to demonstrate God's desire that Christians be colorblind, class blind, and blind to many, many things.

## The Solution

In order to avoid reading scripture with any hint of a critical lens, which might lead to the embrace of entire worldview, the ACT Bible gently alters all references to race and ethnicity, allowing a truly colorblind approach to the Bible.

This radical new translation allows readers to see people simply as people, devoid of characteristics that might lead one to have Marxist thoughts.

Our lawyers have asked me to tell you that if you have sustained Marxist thoughts for more than 4 hours, please see a medical professional.

## Numbers 12

1 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married **they didn't have a good feeling about his wife.** 10 The cloud departed from over the Tent; and behold, Miriam was leprous, **as white as snow** **and it hurt greatly.**

## Numbers 12

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*This passage seems to say that Miriam didn't approve of Moses' wife because she was Black (Ethiopian), so God mocked her by making her very, very white. This sounds far too much like a critique of whiteness (hierarchy based on skin color), which is not in the Bible.*

## James 2

For if a ~~man with a gold ring, in fine clothing~~ **one guy**, comes into your synagogue, and a ~~poor man in filthy clothing~~ **another guy** also comes in, <sup>3</sup> and you pay special attention to ~~him who wears the fine clothing~~ **the first guy** and say, “Sit here in a good place;” and you tell ~~the poor man~~ **the second guy**, “Stand there,” or “Sit by my footstool” <sup>4</sup> haven’t you ~~shown partiality~~ **made a random choice** among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

## James 2

5 Listen, didn't God choose ~~those who are poor~~ **one random group** in this world to ~~be rich in~~ **have** faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the ~~poor man~~ **second guy**. ~~Don't the rich oppress you, and personally drag you before the courts?~~ Aren't people like the first guy with no particularly important characteristics mean to you sometimes?

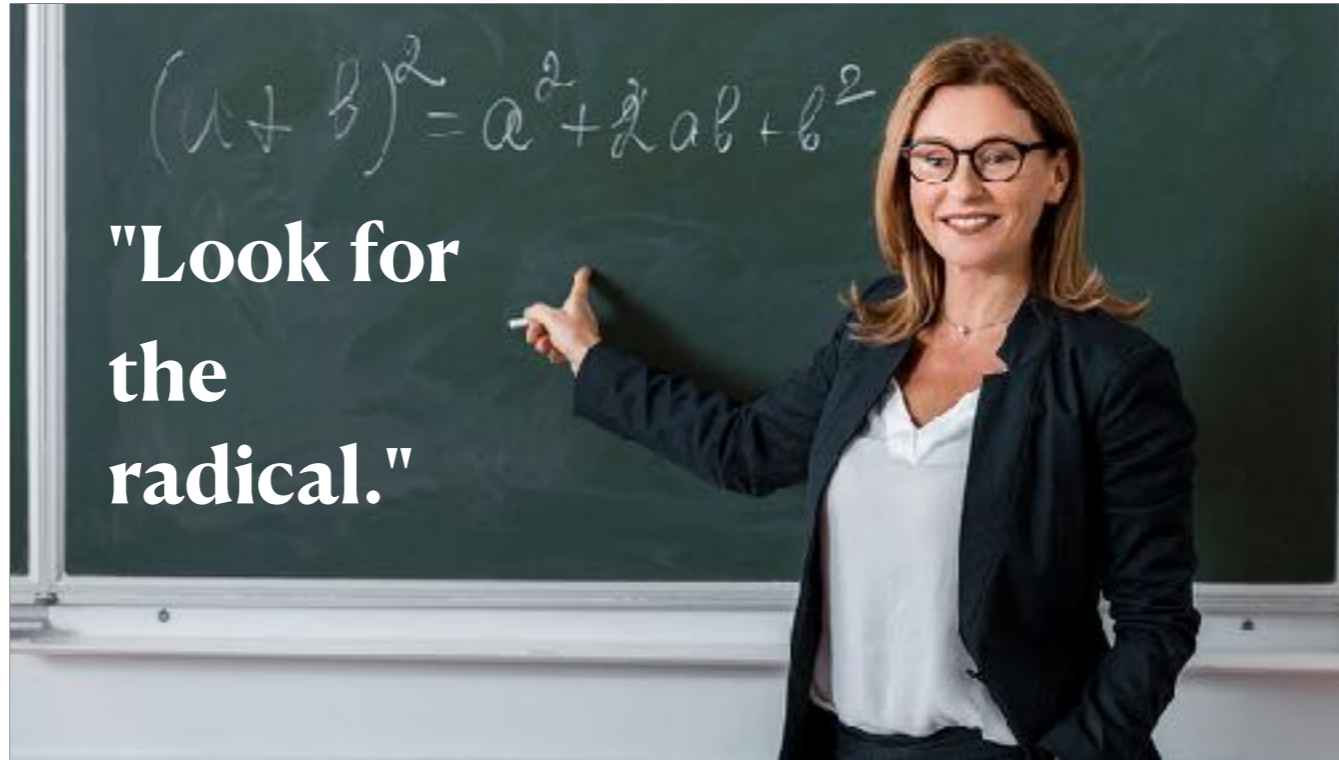


## The Magnificat: Mary's Prophecy

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered  
~~the proud~~ **some people** in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down ~~the powerful from their thrones~~ **some  
people from some places,**  
and lifted up ~~the lowly~~ **some other people.**

He has ~~filled the hungry with good things,~~  
**told some people to pull themselves up by their bootstraps**  
and sent ~~the rich away empty~~ **other people to offshore accounts**  
**to avoid paying their taxes.**



**"Look for  
the  
radical."**

$$(a + b)^2 = a^2 + 2ab + b^2$$



**"Look for  
the  
radical."**

Don't love the **world** or the things in the **world**. If anyone loves the **world**, the love of the Father is not in them. **1 John 2:15**

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God so loved the **world** that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won't perish but will have the life of the Age. **John 3:16**

**World:** the demonic systems of hierarchy, oppression, and violence that are used to bring suffering and death

**World:** God's good creation; the cosmos; the created order that God is within, working to redeem

To set the mind on the **flesh** is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the **flesh** is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the **flesh** cannot please God. **Romans 8:6-8**

This kind of language (misunderstood) got us to a point where flesh=bad. Your body, bad. Your skin, bad. Even got us to a point where we cared more about people's spiritual state than their physical state.

But it forgot that words can be used in more than one way...because, remember, we're asking: How is Jesus going to remove rulers from thrones? Lift up the lowly? Destroy the works of the devil?

The Word (Jesus) became **flesh**  
and made his home among us.  
We have seen his glory,  
glory like that of a father's only son,  
full of grace and truth. **John 1:14**



Since God's children have **flesh and blood**, Jesus also shared **flesh and blood in the same way**. He did this to destroy the one who holds the power over death—the devil—by dying. He set free those who were held in slavery there entire lives by their fear of death.

**Hebrews 2:14-15**

By God taking on flesh, we see the divine reaffirm the goodness of physical creation. The Christian story is not about evacuating our bodies. It's not about waiting for us to be souls. But about the whole of our selves, bodies too, being the way through which God makes his presence known.

**The Incarnation Continues Through Us**

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

Do you not know that your body is a temple place of the Holy Spirit within you?

**1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19**

The Word became flesh to make us "participants in the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

"For the Son of God became human so that humans might become God." St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, 318 CE

"The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made into a human, might make humans into gods." St. Aquinas, 1200s CE

Incarnation isn't only a claim  
about *what happened* in Jesus.

Incarnation is also about  
what is *still happening* in us.