

Love that Shatters Loneliness

By **Al Earley**
GUEST RELIGION COLUMNIST

Francis Chan once shared a surprising story. People kept coming up to him, telling him how much his Facebook page and Twitter posts had helped them. He would smile politely and think that was nice. There was only one problem—he did not have a Facebook or Twitter account. Someone had created fake pages in his name using a picture of his wife. The pages quoted him accurately and posted positive, encouraging content. Chan never said what he did about the fake accounts, but he made this observation: “I don’t do social media because I want to invest in people I can see. I want to help them become disciples.” His words offer wise counsel in our digital age, where “not-so-social” media often leaves people feeling more isolated than ever.

Loneliness has become a quiet epidemic. In the United Kingdom, over nine million people—almost a fifth of the population—say they are always or often lonely. More than half of adults aged 75 and over live alone. Two-fifths say their television is their main companion. Loneliness carries serious health risks. It increases the likelihood of early death by 26 percent, a risk factor comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day and worse than obesity or physical inactivity. We were created for relationship, yet many of us feel profoundly alone.

This struggle is not new. In the Garden of Eden, Adam was surrounded by God’s good creation, yet something was missing. There was no suitable partner for him. So, God created Eve. Relationship had

begun, but so had the messiness that comes with it. Ever since the fall, we have spoken love in broken dialects. We long for connection, but we often settle for shallow substitutes that leave us emptier than before.

Jesus showed us a better way. In John 4, we meet a Samaritan woman at a well. She was a person marked by loneliness and shame. She had been married five times and was living with a man who was not her husband. She came to the well at noon, in the heat of the day, to avoid other people. But Jesus met her there. He saw her, spoke to her with dignity, and offered her living water. In one conversation, He shattered her isolation. She left her water jar, ran back to town, and told everyone, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” (John 4:29). The people came, heard Jesus for themselves, and believed. One broken, lonely woman became the instrument through which an entire village encountered the Savior.

Real love always shatters loneliness because it moves toward people rather than away from them. Mother Teresa understood this. On the wall of her children’s home in Calcutta hung these powerful words. “1) People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway. 2) If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfishness and ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. 3) If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway. 4) If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you. Be honest

and sincere anyway. 5) What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway. 6) If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway. 7) The good you do today will often be forgotten. Do good anyway. 8) Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway. 9) In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.”

This is the kind of love that changes everything. It refuses to let loneliness win. It keeps reaching out, keeps forgiving, keeps serving, even when it is hard, even when it costs something.

Who in your life might be feeling lonely right now that God could be calling you to reach out to? How has loneliness affected you or someone you love, and how has God met you in it? Which line from Mother Teresa’s poem challenges you the most? This week, what is one practical way you can show love that shatters loneliness?

This week, look for someone who feels invisible or lonely. Offer a kind word, a listening ear, or a simple act of service. Pray for them. Invite them into relationship. As you do, you will discover the same truth the Samaritan woman found: When love breaks in, loneliness loses its power. Jesus is still in the business of turning isolated lives into communities of grace. Let Him use you to shatter someone’s loneliness with the love that never fails, and see God’s power become visible in your life.

(To learn more about Al Earley or read previous articles, see www.lagrangepres.org).

Allen County Students Earn SKYCTC Academic Honors

Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College (SKYCTC) has announced its Dean’s List and President’s List honorees for the Spring 2026 semester.

Patricia Ann Bell*, Natalee Marie Binion, Evangeline Clabbers, Jennifer Lynn Cloud-Ortiz, Noah Skywalker Daniels, Jamie Denton*, Brenna Jean Eaton, Joshua Emery*.

Korbel, Richard Schuyler Lemmon*, Damien Clay Marr, Cameron Michael Maston*, Aspen Sage Myers, Jasmine Nicole Perry, Rebecca Ragan, Jordan Railey*.

To be named to the Dean’s List, students must be enrolled full-time and earn a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale. President’s List students must achieve a perfect 4.0 GPA. President’s List recipients are designated with an asterisk (*).

Sara Payton Fletcher, Allison Elizabeth Ford*, Ashley Fox, Logan O. Graves, Spencer Dale Gunderson*, Ember Hafner*, Maiyada Hasan*, Bayleigh Mckenna Hopkins*, Armin Huric, Harley Johnson, Jacqueline Colleen Kirkpatrick.

Nellie Brooke Saylor, Joshua Wyatt Smith, Ava Lillian Jean Spence*, Madison Brooke Stinson*, Keeley Jade Tabor*, Leticia Sharina Tenorio Lopez*.

Allen County William Anderson, Alexis Faith Anderson,

Madeleine Jennifer Kirkpatrick*, Exavier Knight, Kaelen

Jacob Andrew Thomas, Jerrica Todd, Levi Donald Williams, Brittany Shea Wilson, Amber Wood*, Blade Landrum Workman*, and Anthony Cole Wright.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

This notice is intended to inform residents of Scottsville and Allen County, Kentucky that the City of Scottsville is applying for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) assistance in funding to replace and rehabilitate critical components at the City of Scottsville’s wastewater pump stations to improve energy efficiency, operational reliability, and long-term performance while maintaining existing firm pumping capacity. The work focuses on upgrading four pump units and adding new supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) capabilities to modernize station monitoring and control.

A public hearing will be held at the Scottsville City Hall City Council meeting room, 201 W. Main Street, Scottsville, KY, from 8:30-9:00 a.m. CST / 9:30-10:00 a.m. EST Monday, July 13, 2026. The purpose of this hearing is to provide public information on the project, and the grant proposal. Questions or comments about the project may be directed at Scottsville Mayor David Burch, 201 W. Main Street Scottsville, KY 42164. Written comments will be received until the date of the hearing, in the Scottsville City Hall.

Discrimination Clause

The City of Scottsville does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion or disability, and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation, including auxiliary aids and services, to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs and activities. Persons requiring special needs assistance to participate in this public hearing should contact the Scottsville City offices at (270) 237-3238 at least five days prior to the meeting. The TDD number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-648-6057.

Community Service Award

Honoring those who make a difference.

Use this form below or visit our website to enter.

I want to nominate:

(Must be an NCTC customer 21 years or older.)

Nominee’s phone number:

I feel this nominee has served the community in the following ways:

(Please attach separate sheet.)

My name:

My phone number:

Must be an NCTC customer 21 years or older to receive this award. Nomination must be received at NCTC office by Friday, July 24, 2026.



Nominate your choice. Winner will receive \$1,000 donation to his/her favorite charity.

Lafayette 615-666-2151 Westmoreland 615-644-6282 Scottsville 270-622-7500

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