

Dane Clutter & Hope DeVries

It's because Hope and Dane had a desire to improve the welfare of other people in general that they met each other in particular. Both got interested in health care and teamed up in the Emergency Department over at Mizzou. You know how some people have love at first sight? That is not the story of Hope and Dane. Theirs was a reflective, deliberative kind of love that came after some false starts that led to a realization that this relationship deserved investment. Today they are pursuing careers in medicine—out of the same desire to improve the welfare of others—and they are finding tremendous support from their particular love for each other. They have become the closest of friends.

Dane and Hope share other values—they love the great outdoors, yet they prize time in solitude to read a good book. They also share faith in Christ. Just as Hope discovered her engagement ring inside a book, so they have both found great treasures inside the bible. You could say that's where they met the true Lord of their rings.

Among the scripture passages they chose for us to hear today is one taken from Jesus' farewell address to his apostles at the Last Supper. There we discover that he too had a love for the welfare of others in general, yet a great care for his apostles in particular. He had shared with them the secrets of life throughout his ministry and parables. He had demonstrated his care through miracles that restored others' health. Now, at the end of his life, Jesus explains in the presence of his closest friends why he did all these things: "I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete." He loved them, and he wanted them to preserve the gift of love. The secret for preserving love was not hard for them to remember. Jesus told them, "If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love."

Both in medicine and in faith there are commandments to keep. You don't advance through medical school and a career without learning a lot of rules—and not just learning them once, but refining your knowledge of them again and again. The same holds for the commandments in religion. Dane and Hope, you have both demonstrated an awareness of this. It's one thing to learn religion as a child, but it's something else to go back into it as an adult. You have learned more about life, which has raised more questions for you, and you have patiently sought answers again and again, so that you could grow in the faith that guides your heart.

Now as you enter marriage, you apply the same process to your relationship. You got here today because in love you learned more about your partner; you learned what makes each other happy, and you've devoted yourself to fulfilling the commandments that come from a committed relationship. The advice Jesus gave his apostles applies to you. You will remain in love if you are attentive to the expectations of your partner. You will increase your joy if you increase your service. Good things happen when you desire to improve the welfare of someone else.

We thank God for the witness of your love and pray that in following what Christ commands, you will remain in his love that your joy might be complete.