

ROBERT'S REFLECTIONS ΚΟΒΕΚΛ.2 ΚΕΕΓΕCΙΟΝ2

I was just reading a bulletin article from my friend, Andy Warren, entitled "11 Million Dollar Tree". After doing some additional research about this amazing tree, I learned that it was placed inside the lobby of one of the most luxurious and expensive hotels in the world before Christmas back in 2010. I thought it was worth sharing with you.

In the lobby of the Luxury Emirates Palace Hotel in the country of United Arab Emirates, stands a 42 foot tall Christmas tree that is literally worth millions. In addition to numerous traditional ornaments and lights, there are 180 pieces of the world's finest jewelry, consisting of gold, diamonds, pearls, emeralds and rubies. One necklace is valued by the Wall Street Journal at \$1 million dollars. Can you imagine? Well, if you have access to the internet, you can go online and see it for yourself. Type in this website, watch the short video and see what you think of it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebCrgIF8f2A>

You might think I am going to be critical of this vulgar display of obscene wealth. And though something like this might be worthy of criticism, I choose rather to reflect on a story told by our Lord. Of course Jesus knew how mankind places value on things. The world is interested in material possessions. If it is pretty, or exciting or gives some form of pleasure, we are interested. Sometimes Jesus did criticize that type of shallow thinking. But not in this story.

In the following story, Jesus used the way we humans place value on treasure to illustrate the value of the kingdom of God.

Matthew 13:44-46 (NKJV) "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶ who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

If a dishonest man finds a treasure hidden in a field, he would just take it. But here is an honest man who wants to legally obtain something so valuable. It was so valuable that he felt it was worth everything he had. The kingdom of heaven is just like that. It is worth everything you have.

One cannot sneak into God's kingdom. There is no way to enter by hook or by crook. Only by coming to God through Jesus will one succeed in being admitted into God's family.

I suppose the point I am trying to make is that being a Christian is worth it. It is worth the price we have to pay. This life is worth more than an 11 million dollar tree. Let us resolve to do some soul-searching and make sure that we have not misplaced our values. As one man stated it, "Use money, and love people...not the other way around".

God bless,

