



## WARNING SIGNS OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS

### Missing Christmas

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\_\_\_\_\_ of shoppers in the holiday season bought an average of \$126 in gifts for themselves.

**Matthew 2:1-2.** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory— this was during Herod’s kingship—a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. They asked around, “Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We’re on pilgrimage to worship him.”

**Matthew 2:3-4** When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified—and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well. Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

#### Eight Warning Flags of Self-Centeredness

1. Your \_\_\_\_\_ are the most important.
2. You need to be to the \_\_\_\_\_ of attention.

**Matthew 2:5-6** They told him, “Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly: It’s you, Bethlehem, in Judah’s land, no longer bringing up the rear. From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel.”

3. You refuse to \_\_\_\_\_ to others.

**Matthew 2:7-8** Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars from the East. Pretending to be as devout as they were, he got them to tell him exactly when the birth-announcement star appeared. Then he told them the prophecy about Bethlehem, and said, “Go find this child. Leave no stone unturned. As soon as you find him, send word and I’ll join you at once in your worship.”

4. You attempt to \_\_\_\_\_ others for your gain.
5. You need to \_\_\_\_\_ the circumstances, conversations, and the crowd.

**Matthew 2:9-10** Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!

**Matthew 2:11** They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they knelt and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

**Matthew 2:12** In a dream, they were warned not to report back to Herod. So they worked out another route, left the territory without being seen, and returned to their own country.

**Matthew 2:13** After the scholars were gone, God's angel showed up again in Joseph's dream and commanded, "Get up. Take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt. Stay until further notice. Herod is on the hunt for this child, and wants to kill him."

**Matthew 2:14-15** Joseph obeyed. He got up, took the child and his mother under cover of darkness. They were out of town and well on their way by daylight. They lived in Egypt until Herod's death. This Egyptian exile fulfilled what Hosea had preached: "I called my son out of Egypt."

**Matthew 2:16** Herod, when he realized that the scholars had tricked him, flew into a rage. He commanded the murder of every little boy two years old and under who lived in Bethlehem and its surrounding hills. (He determined that age from information he'd gotten from the scholars.)

6. You are \_\_\_\_\_ to care for others.
7. You are never \_\_\_\_\_.
8. You \_\_\_\_\_ others for your lack of responsibility.

#### Eight Welcome Signs of Selflessness

1. You are willing to give your \_\_\_\_\_
2. You are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ and ask for help
3. You are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ from another perspective
4. You are willing to be \_\_\_\_\_
5. You are willing to \_\_\_\_\_
6. You are willing to \_\_\_\_\_
7. You are willing to let some things \_\_\_\_\_
8. You are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ another way

**Philippians 2:5, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...**