



## **THIS YEAR, TRAVEL LIGHT !** -- *Don't carry the weights and burdens of the past year.*

If you want to get off to a good start and move confidently into the new year, it is important to leave behind the "baggage" of the past year, and sometimes even those of previous years, as their weight can become increasingly difficult to carry.

What do I mean by " baggage ? " Well, all our "misses" of the past year: the mistakes, errors, failures, shortcomings, weaknesses, sins, wrong attitudes, wrong priorities, our cowardice, our selfishness, etc. All the times we should have kept quiet, all the times we didn't say what we should have said.

Perhaps you have even lost one or several loved ones, and you realize now that you have neglected them, that you should have encouraged them, loved and appreciated them more, but it is too late.

Or some of your family members or friends were in need but you did not give them the necessary attention, because you were not motivated enough to assist them, when they should have been a priority in your life. It's true, you could have done much better. We all could have done much better.

When you take stock, especially at a "certain age", like me, you wonder how you managed to have been so often "off the mark", "out of step", "out of touch", "blinded", etc. All these examples of "misses" mentioned above, (but the list is not exhaustive) can torment you if you let them invade your mind.

Don't let these thoughts get to the point where you end up forgetting all the times when you said exactly the right thing, when you helped and loved others, when you sacrificed for others, when you have something to be proud of!

At the beginning of this year, it is of course very important to forgive those who have hurt you, but it is equally important to forgive yourself.

God does not want us to be mired in guilt and regret. Our past actions can sometimes weigh heavily on us, but unfortunately there is no way to go back in time and change things.

Forgiving others or forgiving ourselves does not mean turning a blind eye to wrongdoings or denying our responsibilities, but we must understand that God forgives those who turn away from their sins and turn towards Him, and He wants us to move forward.

Ask forgiveness of the people you have done wrong to, if they are still in this world, and also ask forgiveness of God for your failures and lacks of love.

Psalm 103:11-12 describes this wonderful truth about God's forgiveness, "*For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*"

So receive God's forgiveness, forgive yourself, and make a fresh start!

Learn from the past so you don't make the same mistakes again. And rather than asking Him to bless you, ask Him to help you to be more attentive to Him and to have more love for those around you. Just trust Him, the blessings will follow!