

Many times I am reluctant to pray for people in difficult situations.
Maybe they are ill, lonely, bereaved, in debt or just finding it hard to cope.

It's not that I struggle to believe God answers prayer. I know he does.
I hold back from praying because I know God answers prayer and many times the answer will be for me to do something to help.

In my experience, the first change that takes place when I pray is in my mind. As I try to form the words to pray for someone, God is already at work in my mind. I begin to think more carefully about the situation, I begin to realise that I can be, need to be part of the answer to the prayer that I've only just begun to say.

So, to be honest, sometimes I hold back because I've come to believe that before I open my mouth to pray, I need to accept a willingness to be ready to open my hand, home, diary, wallet, arms, car door or any number of inconvenient actions as part of God's provision for the person for whom I pray.

So I wrote this some time ago to help me begin to pray:

**God grant peace to those who work for peace
God grant courage to those who struggle against oppression
God grant light to those whose hope is growing dim
God grant resource to those who work for justice**

**And where all that requires me
to live a peaceful, courageous, enlightened, generous life;**

God grant me His Spirit that I may so live.

Amen