

## Please Listen

When I ask you to listen to me  
and you start giving me advice,  
you have not done what I asked.  
When I ask you to listen to me  
and you begin to tell my why  
I shouldn't feel that way,  
you are trampling on my feelings.  
When I ask you to listen to me  
and you feel you have to do something  
to solve my problem,  
you have failed me,  
strange as that may seem.  
Listen! All I ask is that you listen.  
Don't talk or do—just hear me.  
Advice is cheap; 20 cents will get  
you both Dear Abby and Billy Graham  
in the same newspaper.  
And I can do for myself; I am not helpless.  
Maybe discouraged and faltering,  
but not helpless.  
When you do something for me that I can  
and need to do for myself,  
you contribute to my fear and  
inadequacy.  
But when you accept as a simple fact  
that I feel what I feel,  
no matter how irrational,  
then I can stop trying to convince  
you and get about this business  
of understanding what's behind  
this irrational feeling.  
And when that's clear, the answers are  
obvious and I don't need advice.  
Irrational feelings make sense when  
we understand what's behind them.  
Perhaps that's why prayer works, sometimes,  
for some people—because God is mute,  
and he doesn't give advice or try  
to fix things.  
God just listens and lets you work  
it out for yourself.  
So please listen, and just hear me.  
And if you want to talk, wait a minute  
for your turn—and I will listen to you.