

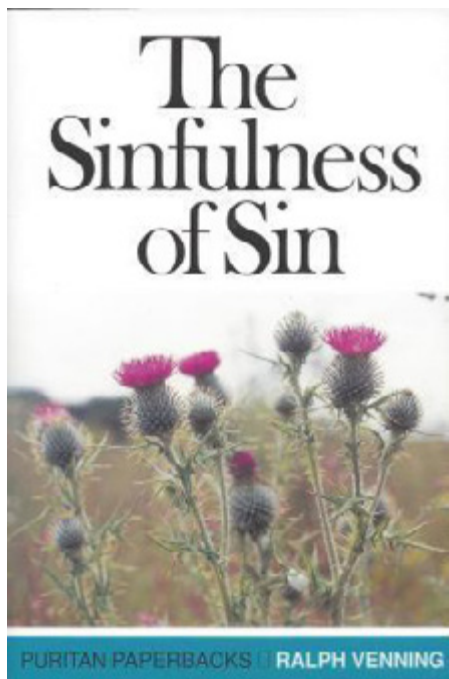


WEEKLY
CHRISTIAN
FOCUS

RALPH VENNING

1621-1673 (or 1674)

I first became acquainted with Ralph Venning through an almost discarded book called 'The Plague



of Plagues' which I purchased at Hinckley Bible book shop on its greatly discounted bookshelf for 20 pence in 2012.

I was so impressed by the book I seriously thought of having it translated into Mandarin for our Chinese flock. It was hard to believe that such truth had been blasted out by this man in England almost four centuries before!

Ralph Venning was from Dorset, England and lived in the 17th century

SIN makes the sinner wish and endeavor that there might be no God, for sinners are haters of God.

RALPH VENNING
1622 – 1674



from 1621 to 1674. He was a highly educated man who eventually became a writer and preacher of great renown throughout England.

His absolute masterpiece called 'The plague of Plagues' which is a 260+ page continuous Bible study and commentary about 'Sin' (Which is the Plague of plagues). Published as it was just a few years after the great fire of London and the plague, it was considered virtually prophetic.

Coming also just a year or two before the great 'Ejection' and regrouping of devoted Christians over to the New World. (although Ralph Venning finished writing this extraordinary book just a year before the Great (bubonic) Plague of London, so many people realised this book was prophetic.

Ralph Venning seemed to positively be afraid of no man and was also tremendously popular among

the poor whom he defended and encouraged those with greater assets to help and bring them out of poverty as a Christian duty.

He also fully understood the value of 'getting it down on paper'. This literary work is up there in my top ten best Christian books of all time, I hope you will try to get a copy. It's literally worth a million pounds in my opinion.

So in this incredible book, which has, by my count, around 190 sections and sub sections each covering a distinct message about 'sin' its effect and how to overcome it ultimately!

He is also a very wise man and anointed by the Lord to share such incredibly deep insights, and he is also a Master of Metaphors and brings up some of the most amazing Bible verses, that you think, 'Wow, I never realised that!' You can buy this

book and others at the link below

[The Sinfulness of Sin \(Puritan Paperbacks\): Amazon.co.uk: Venning, Ralph: 9781800402300: Books](#)

[Amazon.com : Ralph Venning books](#)

But today, I am going to quote a rather obscure part of the book 'The Plague of Plagues' where Ralph Venning talks about 'Youth'. Since I found this very deep and inspiring, I reproduce it here, slightly changing the 17th century English in just a couple of places.

If you love Youth as the Lord does and wish them to succeed for God, please give your attention and prayers for youth to the rest of this article! This section is actually a



warning to youth and explaining them the urgency and importance of turning to God while young!

'So let's begin with Ralph Venning's own words'

► **"Indeed, we cannot be too soon** nor too much religious (on fire for Jesus), but the sooner and more the better. If ever you mean to be religious, there is no time like the present, no day better than today.

'Remember now thy creator' ([Ecclesiastes 12:1](#)) for so the word runs, that is God in Christ, for he created all things by Christ Jesus ([Ephesians 3:9](#); [Colossians 1:16](#)) Remember now, in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them'. ([Ecclesiastes 12:1](#)); not only will you have no pleasure in the evil days of sickness,

death and judgment, that evil day which you put far from you, but none in the remembrance of your youthful days.

Youth is the most proper season of all our days, and now is the most proper SEASON OF ALL OUR YOUTH TO REMEMBER God in.

If you say, we will do that when we are old, for it is now springtime with us (our May-time), and we will think of religion in a winter's night; do not boast of tomorrow, young as you are, for you are old enough to die.

This night your soul may be taken from you, and you may be in Hell tomorrow!

Therefore take the wise man's (Solomon's) advice

, 'Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth and walk in the easy of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes' ([Ecclesiastes 11:9](#)).

Yes, you say, with all our hearts we will take this advice; we like it well, for it is pleasing doctrine. We would rather mind (do) this than be holy; we will be debonair and jovial, for we do not care for severe preachers of strictness and devotion.

We will laugh and sing, drink and dance away our time while we have it. But do not mistake, Solomon is speaking here ironically and has something else to say; yes, rejoice, yes walk in the ways of thine own heart and eyes, yes, but what then?

'But know thou youth that for all these things God will bring you into judgment ([Ecclesiastes 11:9](#)) how will you answer for your vanity and follies, your pride and wantonness, your drunkenness and debauchery then?

Oh, remember your creator before that evil day comes, and prevent a life of sin which is the most

miserable life in the world! For God has promised that if you seek Him early you will find Him, and in finding Him, you find everything. ([Proverbs 8:17-21](#))

Remember Him in your youth, for memory is then in its prime and most flourishing. Shall He who gave you your being and memory, be forgotten by you?

If God did not remember you, what would become of you? See what is likely to become of you if you forget God. ([Psalm 50:22](#)) However good and however excellent your memory is, I am sure that you have a very bad one if you forget and do not remember your Creator in the days of your youth.

A young man's glory is his strength, and will you give your strength to sin, which is due to God ([Mark 12:30](#))?

God's sacrifices were to be young; the first-ripe fruits and the first-born (which is the strength, [Genesis 49:3](#)) were to be dedicated to God, he will not be put off (satisfied) with less now. God's chiefest worthies have been and are his young men ([1 John 2:13-14](#)).

God's men of valour are young men. The princes of this world, like the Romans of old, make up their armies of young men, the flower of their army is of young and strong men; and shall the King of kings be put off with what is decrepit and worn out? No, he will not!

Go, offer it to your governor (manager, boss), will he be pleased with or accept such persons? ([Malachi 1:8, 13-14](#)) He will not, neither will God, who is a great King, the Lord of hosts, whose Name is dreadful.

Those people who have followed God early in their lives, are greatly famed and honoured in the scriptures records. God is taken

with and remembers the kindness of their youth (**Jeremiah 2:2**) Abel, though dead, is spoken of with an honourable testimony, even that of God himself, for serving God so young and so well. (**Hebrews 11:4**)

Joseph was very early religious ; so was Samuel. Jeroboam's little son is not to be forgotten, for God has honoured him. King Josiah, Daniel and the three Hebrew children or young men of Israel are all enrolled in the court of honour and heaven. In the New Testament, St John is called the disciple whom Jesus loved, his bosom favourite and darling, and became his disciple while still very young. It is said in commendation of Timothy that he knew the scriptures from a child (**2 Timothy 3:15**).

Many parents are afraid to have serious and divine things taught their children lest it make them melancholy and depress them. But is anything better able to fit them for service to God or man than religion? Or is any spirit comparable to that true greatness and gallantry of spirit in being afraid to sin? We should teach children moral and religious courage and bravery, which fears to sin more than to die, and to make the choice of Moses, preferring the reproaches of Christ before the treasures and pleasures of this world.

In this way they are likely to attain better names and greater wealth, to enjoy more pleasure and preferment than any that this world can confer upon them.

They who are taught to love and serve God the best are best bred; and they attain most honour who honour God, for them will God Himself honour.

I am not speaking derogatorily about anything that is seen as virtuous among men or is even attractive and genteel. I would, however, encourage you to even more, to what is commendable to God and in his sight of great price, that is to remember him in the days of your youth.

For evil days are coming; sickness, old age, death is approaching; the



judge is at the door. Certainly that is best while we are young that will be best when we are old and die; and that can be worth very little at the beginning which will be worth nothing at the end of our days.

The sins of youth will lie heavy upon old age. Even if God gave repentance to you when you are old, it will cost you the more because you did not repent sooner, and you will regret that you have been so long in sin

and you now have only a little while to live in which to testify your conversion. Job thought it sad to possess the sins of his youth (**Job 13:23, 26**).

Things that are sweet in youth often prove the bitterness of old age, and what are pleasures while young bring pains when old.

This made King David pray to God that he would not remember against him the sins of his youth (**Psalms 25:7**)

Though I might add much more, I suppose this (section) will suffice to show how important it is for us to be religious early (following God and loving Him), since sin is so dangerous and destructive a thing. "

(end of section from Ralph Venning's book).

Praise the Lord. In days long past, like that of Ralph Venning, preachers often spoke and wrote in this style you see here today. In fact it was a very effective method in many ways, although we may feel it a bit odd in places today.

I encourage you to pray over this warning message and see how you can influence young people to day for Jesus.

Amen. God bless you.

Until next week,

Jerry and the WCF Team

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