



Dear Friends,

When I began work as a lawyer aged 22, I didn't have a long-term career plan. I joined a city law firm that mostly acted for corporate clients. I changed jobs over two years later. I couldn't see myself working for 60-70 hours per week in a bid to claw my way to partnership. I loved practising law, so I decided to work as a lawyer for the NSW Department of Fair Trading. This new role fit with our shared vision as a couple to prioritise family and to be involved at church.

Fast forward to a number of years. I am almost 29. Kathryn and I have a two year old and a bub on the way. I am firmly established in my role at Fair Trading. I have developed an expertise in consumer credit law. Seemingly overnight, lawyers with consumer credit law experience were in high demand. The surge in demand was due to the introduction of new consumer credit laws which banks and financiers were trying to get their heads around.

I received a job offer from a national law firm that is now regarded as being among Australia's "big six." They offered me a position as a senior associate. There would be a huge bump in salary. There was also the kudos that goes with working in a prestigious firm.

The offer was very tempting. For the first time in my legal career, I began to think about the longer term future – longer than at least the next twelve months. Having children does that to you. Kathryn and I no longer had to simply be concerned with ourselves. We now had a young family. We began to imagine a different future for us if I took the job. More money. Relocate to a new suburb. I began to get excited.

What happened? For an entire week, I hardly slept. I felt like Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32. Why? Because God began impressing upon me a completely different future from the one I had been contemplating. I wanted God's guidance about whether to pursue the job offer. God had other ideas. He wanted me to consider going into fulltime pastoral ministry. I hadn't seen that coming!

I decided to share this story with you because I have recently been reading 1 Peter. What has stood out to me from Peter's letter is his focus on what theologians call "eschatology." Eschatology is just a fancy term for talking about the ultimate goal of God's plan of salvation – for his world, for the church, for each person. Let me illustrate with a few texts from 1 Peter.

Peter says Christians have been given "new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade" (1:3-4). He instructs believers to "set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming" (1:13). He encourages believers to rejoice if they "participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed" (4:12).

God's word calls on believers to make choices NOW and to act NOW with an eye to the future. To God's promised future when Christ will be revealed. When we will enter his glory. When we will gain our eternal inheritance.

It took me having children before I began to give serious thought to my longer term working future. I could no longer just live and work with a focus on the present. I had to think about the endgame. What kind of future did we want for our family and children?

I am challenged again by God's word to live now with an eye to the future. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is our basis for knowing how the world's story, the church's story, my story ends. It ends with the return of Jesus. It ends with living in his glorious presence for all eternity. It ends with a new creation. I pray that knowing how the story ends will determine how I behave now, use my money now, spend my time now and apply my talents now.

God Bless,
Mark Adams