

Question:

When Christ said in John 19:28 that He accomplished his goal; what goal did He complete?

Answer:

You asked about Jesus' statement regarding completing a goal as mentioned in John 19:28. Let's read the text first:

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John 19:28-30)

The words, "It is finished," come just before Jesus died. They express the truth John says Jesus knew at that moment. They were an act of his final conscious moments. Let's go back in the story a little over 12 hours. What we find there may cast light on what Jesus meant with these three words.

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed. "Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:39-42)

Jesus, who was in very nature God, had become a human being. See Philippians 2:5-8. His human nature shrank from the torture and death that awaited him if he followed through on the plan that he would die to remove the sins of the human race. So he prayed that God would let him off. But even as a human Christ remained submitted to his father's will.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down on the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)

What joy could the Father set before Jesus that would encourage the human Jesus to endure suffering and death? Simply this, that his death would make it

possible for God to save the human race. This was why he agreed to empty himself of his divinity.

However, as a human Jesus was not entirely confident that he could endure without once exercising his divine power to ease his own suffering. But when he saw that his death was near, he understood that he had made it. He had resisted all of Satan's temptations and his natural desire to save himself. This would allow God to save the human race. It is this work, the work of saving humans, that Jesus now knew was complete. He died just after announcing, not just to humans, but also to the good and evil angels that surrounded the scene, that salvation was certain for any human who wanted it. The work of salvation (it) was "finished."

The Father knew that because Jesus was willing to die, he could save you, and all the other humans who came to him through his Son, Jesus. The work of salvation for you is complete, if you will only trust Christ and accept the gift. That gift includes with it the blessing of eternal life, because sin is what kills us and Jesus was now able to take sin from us.

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.
After the suffering of his soul,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied....
(Isaiah 53:10, 11)

So even the Old Testament prophet understood the motive Jesus would have for becoming our sacrifice. Imagine the joy of Jesus and the joy in heaven when this announcement was made.

Our salvation was the goal Jesus had reached. May God bless you as you continue to study his Word and learn more about him.

Elkanah