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# With One Accord

*In order to reach our sublime destiny, we need each other, and we need to be unified.*

One of the most remarkable creatures on earth is the monarch butterfly. On a trip to Mexico to spend Christmas with my husband's family, we visited a butterfly sanctuary, where millions of monarch butterflies spend the winter. It was fascinating to see such an impressive sight and for us to reflect on the example of unity and obedience to divine laws that God's creations demonstrate.<sup>1</sup>

Monarch butterflies are master navigators. They use the sun's position to find the direction they need to go. Every spring, they travel thousands of miles from Mexico to Canada, and every fall, they return to the same sacred fir forests in Mexico.<sup>2</sup> They do this year after year, one tiny wing flap at a time. During their journey, they cluster together at night on trees to protect themselves from the cold and from predators.<sup>3</sup>



*Like monarch butterflies returning to their home in Mexico, we are on a journey back to our heavenly home.*

A group of butterflies is called a kaleidoscope.<sup>4</sup> Isn't that a beautiful image? Each butterfly in a kaleidoscope is unique and different, yet these seemingly fragile creatures have been designed by a loving Creator with the ability to survive, travel, multiply, and disseminate life as they go from one flower to the next, spreading pollen. And although each butterfly is different, they work together to make the world a more beautiful and fruitful place.

Like the monarch butterflies, we are on a journey back to our heavenly home, where we will reunite with our Heavenly Parents.<sup>5</sup> Like the butterflies, we have been given divine attributes that allow us to navigate through life, in order to "[fill] the measure of [our] creation."<sup>6</sup> Like them, if we knit our hearts together,<sup>7</sup> the Lord will protect us "as a hen [gathers] her chickens under her wings"<sup>8</sup> and will make us into a beautiful kaleidoscope.

Girls and boys, young women and young men, sisters and brothers, we are on this journey together. In order to reach our sublime destiny, we need each other, and we need to be unified. The Lord has commanded us, "Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine."<sup>9</sup>

Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of unity with His Father. They are one in purpose, in love, and in works, with "the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father."<sup>10</sup>

How can we follow the Lord's perfect example of unity with His Father and be more unified with Them and with each other?

An inspiring pattern is found in Acts 1:14. We read, "[The men] all continued *with one accord* in prayer and supplication, with the women."<sup>11</sup>

I think it is significant that the phrase "with one accord" appears several times in the book of Acts, where

we read about what Jesus Christ's followers did immediately after He ascended to heaven as a resurrected being, as well as the blessings they received because of their efforts. It is also significant that we find a similar pattern among the faithful of the American continent at the time the Lord visited and ministered to them. "With one accord" means in agreement, in unity, and all together.

Some of the things that the faithful Saints did in unity in both places were that they testified of Jesus Christ, studied the word of God, and ministered to each other with love.<sup>12</sup>

The Lord's followers were one in purpose, in love, and in works. They knew who they were, they knew what they had to do, and they did it with love for God and for each other. They were part of a magnificent kaleidoscope moving forward with one accord.

Some of the blessings they received were that they were filled with the Holy Ghost, miracles took place among them, the Church grew, there was no contention among the people, and the Lord blessed them in all things.<sup>13</sup>

We can suppose that the reason why they were so united is because they knew the Lord personally. They had been close to Him, and they had been witnesses of His divine mission, of the miracles that He performed, and of His Resurrection. They saw and touched the marks in His hands and feet. They knew with certainty that He was the promised Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. They knew that "He is the source of all healing, peace, and eternal progress."<sup>14</sup>

Even though we may not have seen our Savior with our physical eyes, we can know that He lives. As we draw closer to Him, as we seek to receive a personal witness through the Holy



Ghost of His divine mission, we will have a better understanding of our purpose; the love of God will dwell in our hearts;<sup>15</sup> we will have the determination to be one in the kaleidoscopes of our families, wards, and communities; and we will minister to each other "in newer, better ways."<sup>16</sup>

Miracles happen when the children of God work together guided by the Spirit to reach out to others in need.

We hear so many stories of neighborly love shown among people when catastrophe strikes. For example, when the city of Houston suffered a massive flood last year, people forgot about their own needs and went to the rescue. An elders quorum president sent a call for help to the community, and a fleet of 77 boats was quickly organized. Rescuers went around the affected neighborhoods and transported whole families to one of our meetinghouses, where they received refuge and much needed help. Members and nonmembers worked together with one purpose.

In Santiago, Chile, a Relief Society president had the desire to help immigrants in her community who had come from Haiti. By counseling together with her priesthood leaders,

she and other leaders came up with the idea to offer Spanish classes to those immigrants, helping them integrate better into their new home. Every Saturday morning, missionaries gather together with their eager students. The feeling of unity in that building is an inspiring example of people from diverse backgrounds serving with one accord.

In Mexico, hundreds of members traveled for hours to help the survivors of two major earthquakes. They came with tools, machinery, and love for their neighbor. As volunteers gathered together in one of our meetinghouses waiting for instructions, the mayor of the city of Ixhuatán broke down in tears as he saw such a manifestation of "the pure love of Christ."<sup>17</sup>

The Lord is now giving us the opportunity to counsel together each month in our priesthood quorums and Relief Societies, so we can all be more active participants in our ward or branch kaleidoscope—a place where we all fit in and where we are all needed.

Every one of our paths is different, yet we walk them together. Our path is not about what we have done or where we have been; it is about where we are going and what we are



becoming, in unity. When we counsel together guided by the Holy Ghost, we can see where we are and where we need to be. The Holy Ghost gives us a vision that our natural eyes cannot see, because “revelation is scattered among us,”<sup>18</sup> and when we put that revelation together, we can see more.

As we work in unity, our purpose should be to look for and do the Lord’s will; our incentive should be the love we feel for God and for our neighbor;<sup>19</sup> and our greatest desire should be to “labor diligently,”<sup>20</sup> so we can prepare the way for the glorious return of our Savior. The only way we will be able to do so is “with one accord.”

Like the monarch butterflies, let us continue on our journey together in purpose, each of us with our own attributes and contributions, working to make this a more beautiful and fruitful world—one small step at a time and in harmony with God’s commandments.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has promised us that when we are gathered together in His name, He is in the midst of us.<sup>21</sup> I testify that He lives and that He was resurrected on a beautiful spring morning like today. He is the Monarch above all monarchs, “the King of kings, and [the] Lord of lords.”<sup>22</sup>

May we be one in the Father and in His Begotten Son, as we are guided by the Holy Ghost, is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. See Abraham 3:26; 4:7, 9–12, 15, 18, 21, 24–25.
2. An interesting fact about monarch butterflies is that it takes up to three generations to make the trip northward to Canada. However, a “super generation” makes the whole trip southward to Mexico, spends the winter there, and makes the first lap back north. (See “Flight of the Butterflies” [video, 2012]; “Flight’: A Few Million Little Creatures That Could,” WBUR News, Sept. 28, 2012, wbur.org.)
3. See “Why Do Monarchs Form Overnight Roosts during Fall Migration?” learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/sl/17/text.html.
4. See “What Is a Group of Butterflies Called?” amazingbutterflies.com/frequentlyaskedquestions.htm; see also “kaleidoscope,” merriam-webster.com. *Kaleidoscope* comes from the Greek *kalos* (“beautiful”) and *eidos* (“form”).
5. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 145.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 88:19; see also Doctrine and Covenants 88:25.
7. See Mosiah 18:21.
8. 3 Nephi 10:4.
9. Doctrine and Covenants 38:27.
10. Mosiah 15:7.
11. Acts 1:14; emphasis added.
12. Some of the things that the Saints did in Jerusalem: chose a new Apostle and “seven men of honest report” and supported them (see Acts 1:26; 6:3–5); gathered together on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2:1); testified of Jesus Christ (see Acts 2:22–36; 3:13–26; 4:10, 33; 5:42); called people to repentance and baptized them (see Acts 2:38–41); continued in fellowship and breaking of bread, and in prayer (see Acts 2:42); were together and had everything in common (see Acts 2:44–46; 4:34–35); attended the temple (see Acts 2:46); ate “their meat with gladness and singleness of heart” (Acts 2:46); praised God and found favor with all people (see Acts 2:47); were obedient to the faith (see Acts 6:7); gave themselves continually to prayer and “the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4). Some of the things that the Saints did on the American continent: preached the gospel of Christ (see 3 Nephi 28:23); formed a church of Christ (see 4 Nephi 1:1); baptized people (see 4 Nephi 1:1); everyone dealt justly one with another (see 4 Nephi 1:2); had all things in common among them

- (see 4 Nephi 1:3); rebuilt cities (see 4 Nephi 1:7–9); were married (see 4 Nephi 1:11); walked after the commandments that they received from the Lord (see 4 Nephi 1:12); continued in fasting and prayer (see 4 Nephi 1:12); met together often to pray and hear the word of the Lord (see 4 Nephi 1:12).
13. Some of the blessings that the Saints received in Jerusalem: they were filled with the Holy Ghost (see Acts 2:4; 4:31); they received the gift of tongues and prophecy and spoke “the wonderful works of God” (see Acts 2:4–18); many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles (see Acts 2:43); miracles happened (see Acts 3:1–10; 5:18–19; 6:8, 15); more people joined the Church (see Acts 2:47; 5:14). Some of the blessings that the Saints received on the American continent: people were converted unto the Lord (see 3 Nephi 28:23; 4 Nephi 1:2); a generation was blessed (see 3 Nephi 28:23); there were no contentions and disputations among them (see 4 Nephi 1:2, 13, 15, 18); there were no rich and poor (see 4 Nephi 1:3); “they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift” (4 Nephi 1:3); there was peace in the land (see 4 Nephi 1:4); mighty miracles happened (see 4 Nephi 1:5, 13); the Lord did prosper them exceedingly (see 4 Nephi 1:7, 18); they did wax strong, did multiply exceedingly fast, and became exceedingly fair and delightful (see 4 Nephi 1:10); they were blessed according to the multitude of promises made to them by the Lord (see 4 Nephi 1:11); “there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people” (4 Nephi 1:15); “there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God” (4 Nephi 1:16); “there were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of -ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God” (4 Nephi 1:17); the Lord blessed them in all their doings (see 4 Nephi 1:18).
  14. Jean B. Bingham, “That Your Joy Might Be Full,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 85.
  15. See 4 Nephi 1:15.
  16. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Emissaries to the Church,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 62.
  17. Moroni 7:47.
  18. Neil L. Andersen, in “Auxiliary Panels Use New Training Library,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2011, 76.
  19. See Matthew 22:37–40.
  20. Jacob 5:61.
  21. See Matthew 18:20.
  22. 1 Timothy 6:15.