



WOW: Word Of the Week

Unique

January 14, 2026

I worked in ministry with an elder who was a biology professor at Michigan State University. As we traveled the backroads of Michigan together on mission trips to smaller churches, he was fond of describing the towns we passed through as “one-horse” towns. He quickly added that he meant they were unique. He had developed his own etymology of the word unique. Uni- means one. Equus means horse. Unique. One-horse!

The dictionary says something different. Unique: being the only one of its kind; unlike anything else.

Dale Jenkins has written about the uniqueness of the calling of John the Baptist and of our own calling.

John the Baptist was unique. He was called in a unique way, to deliver a unique message. He was called to prepare people for an event that had been prophesied 2000 years earlier. He spoke to people who had given up on the Messiah, people who doubted the Messiah would ever come. John was unique in several ways—his attire, his menu, his venue. John was of the priestly lineage, but he did not deliver his message in the temple. He spoke truth—truth that eventually got him killed. The truth he spoke resonated with the people—they had to go out to hear him! The Bible says “all Judea went out to be baptized by him” (Mark 1:5).

We are not called to be unique in the same ways that John the Baptist was unique. If we were called to be exactly like him, he would not longer be unique and we would not be unique.

We have a calling that parallels John’s calling. We could say that we also have a unique calling. We are called to prepare people for the coming of Jesus. We prepare people for an event that was promised 2000 years ago. We speak to people who have given up on Jesus’ coming again, some who ridicule. We speak truth in a culture that has been convinced there is no such thing as truth.

The Bible describes the gospel as unique. There is only one gospel, although many gospels are preached. The Good News of Jesus is unique. The call to obedience is unique. God’s plan for making us imitators of Jesus by sharing his death, burial, and resurrection is unique. God’s plan for making disciples—baptizing them and teaching them is unique.

May we never be ashamed of the unique gospel. It and it alone is God’s power for salvation. Believe it, obey it, live it.