

# **Lowrie named recipient of Paul Powell Award in preaching**

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WACO—D.L. Lowrie, longtime Texas Baptist pastor and denominational leader, became the first recipient of the Paul Powell Award in preaching at the National Preaching Conference.

Lowrie received the award at the inaugural National Preaching Conference, held Nov. 19-21 at First Baptist Church in Waco. Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary hosted the conference, sponsored by the seminary's Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching.

Lowrie was pastor of First Baptist Church in Lubbock from 1980 to 1986 and again from 1992 to 2001. His denominational service included time as president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, director of Texas Baptists' State Missions Commission and as executive director-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Lowrie grew up in Tennessee and, after surrendering to preach in October 1953, attended Carson-Newman University in Jefferson.



D.L. Lowrie preaching during the inaugural National Preaching Conference (Photo by Eric Black)

## **‘Just wanted to be faithful and effective’**

In the introduction to his sermon, Lowrie explained how he came to Texas to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary before being called as pastor of North Fort Worth Baptist Church, where he influenced and mentored countless seminarians and pastors. He cited books by B.H. Carroll, along with the allure of the West, as significant inspiration for coming to Texas.

While his son David—now pastor of First Baptist Church in Decatur—was a student at Southwestern Seminary in the 1980s, a group of students challenged one another to name the greatest biblical preachers. D.L. Lowrie was on the short list, much to his son’s surprise. David Lowrie then told his schoolmates D.L. Lowrie is his dad, much to their surprise and disbelief.

He recounted his father’s love for the Bible, recalling that the elder Lowrie

even dropped out of college at one point so he could wake up to read the Bible and end his day the same way.

“I never aspired to be a great preacher,” Lowrie said. “I only wanted to be an effective preacher. I just wanted to be faithful and effective wherever God placed me.”

In a sermon of encouragement to other preachers, Lowrie preached from Isaiah 55:8-11, defining the requirements for effective preaching.

“Pastors do more than preach, but pastors don’t do anything more important than preach,” Lowrie said.

## Motivation for faithful preaching

Lowrie was asked, “What keeps you going?” He named three things:

- **Calling.** Preaching is a calling and not a career, Lowrie said. While he acknowledged he doubted other things, he said, “I never had a moment I doubted God called me.”
- **Confidence in biblical authority.** “You’ve got to have an unshakable confidence that this book (the Bible) is the word of God,” he said. Citing 1 John 2, Lowrie added: “Years ago I settled in my heart a conviction this is the word of God, and I will preach it and teach it as the word of God. .. Don’t waste your life in search of sermon ideas. Become a student of the word.”
- **The Holy Spirit.** Citing John 7, Lowrie said when he surrendered to the power of the Holy Spirit, he was empowered like never before. “I didn’t speak in tongues, and I didn’t jump the pews. I was in pew-jumping territory, but I didn’t jump the pews,” he said. He exhorted preachers to be filled constantly with the Holy Spirit.

Tony Evans, senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, followed Lowrie on the first night of the conference.

Other plenary preachers and speakers included Jimmy Mellado of [Compassion International](#), Bible teacher Beth Moore, preaching professor Joel Gregory, Alistair Begg of the Truth for Life ministry, Mary Hulst of Calvin College and Pastor Ralph West of The Church Without Walls in Houston.