

# Baylor survey names a dozen preachers as most effective

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Baylor released the list of 11 men and one woman, chosen by scholars of homiletics—the art of preaching—May 1.

“In a world where talk is cheap and there seems to be no end to it, the preacher has to recover the priority and power of the word,” said Hulitt Gloer, director of the [Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching](#) at Baylor's Truett Seminary.

“Words are the tools of the preacher and that gives them incredible power,” Gloer added.

The dozen preachers in the top 12—academics, pastors and authors—were picked from nearly 800 nominees.

Preaching experts in the Academy of Homiletics and the Evangelical Homiletics Society judged how much nominees’ preaching matched criteria that included their selection of biblical texts, the relevance of their sermons and their ability to deliver them in language people can understand.

It’s been 22 years since Baylor last produced such a survey. The Baylor preaching center sent the 1996 criteria to more than 500 homiletics professors for their input on criteria for the new survey. Members of the two homiletics societies were then asked to nominate as many as five people who met the new criteria. A total of 179 members—more than 30 percent of the membership of those two societies—submitted names. The final choices were narrowed down from 39 individuals who received the largest number of nominations.

## **Here are the 12 most effective preachers they selected:**

**Alistair Begg** has been senior pastor at Parkside Church in Cleveland since 1983. He also is the Bible teacher on the radio and online program “Truth For Life.” A member of the council of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Begg has written numerous books.

**Tony Evans** is the founding pastor of Dallas’ Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, which began in his home in 1976 and has grown to a membership of almost 10,000. Evans is the first African-American to earn a doctorate in theology from Dallas Theological Seminary. The radio and television broadcaster has

been the chaplain 30 years for the Dallas Mavericks basketball team.



Joel Gregory, professor of preaching at Truett Theological Seminary, in his natural habitat. (Photo courtesy of Gregory Ministries)

**Joel Gregory** is the George W. Truett Endowed Chair in Preaching and Evangelism at Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary. A preacher for 50 years, he gave the concluding message at the 2017 Baptist World Congress in Durban, South Africa. He is a member of the Baptist World Alliance Commission on Worship and Spirituality and edited *Baptist Preaching: A Global Anthology*.

**Timothy Keller** is the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City. He also chairs Redeemer City to City, a leadership development organization that starts new churches in urban centers worldwide. Keller is the author of several books, some listed among *The New York Times* bestsellers.

**Thomas G. Long** is an emeritus preaching professor and director of the Early Career Pastoral Leadership Program at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta. His textbook *The Witness of Preaching* is used in theological schools across the globe. He also was named one of the 12 most effective preachers in Baylor University's 1996 survey.

**Otis Moss III** is the senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. The activist, author and filmmaker is an ordained minister in the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the United Church of Christ. He is on the board of *The Christian Century* magazine and is a chaplain of the Children's Defense Fund's Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Child Advocacy Ministry.

**John Piper** is chancellor of Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis. The leader of [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org) has served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis 33 years. He is the author of more than 50 books.

**Haddon Robinson** was the former president and Harold John Ockenga Distinguished Professor of Preaching at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston. His book *Biblical Preaching* remains in use in Bible colleges and seminaries worldwide. Robinson, who died July 22, 2017, was named one of the 12 most effective preachers in Baylor's 1996 survey.

**Andy Stanley** is the senior pastor of an Atlanta suburban mega-church with six locations. He also is the founder of North Point Ministries, a global network of more than 30 churches. A 2010 survey of U.S. pastors by *Outreach Magazine* identified Stanley as one of the top 10 most influential living pastors in America.

**Charles Swindoll** is the senior pastor at Stonebriar Community Church in Frisco. The radio preacher is the author of more than 70 books. He was named one of the 12 most effective preachers in Baylor's 1996 survey.

**Barbara Brown Taylor**, an Episcopal priest, author and theologian, has served as a faculty member at institutions including Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology and the Certificate in Theological Studies program at Arrendale State Prison for Women in Alto, Ga. In 2014, she was named to *Time* magazine's list of the 100 most influential people in the

world. She was named one of the 12 most effective preachers in Baylor's 1996 survey.

**Ralph Douglas West** is founder and senior pastor of The Church Without Walls in Houston, which has grown from 32 members to more than 24,000 families. He is an adjunct professor of preaching at Truett Seminary. The radio broadcaster is the author of several books.