

Excerpt from *The Spirit of Pilgrims* by Lyman Beecher

“The government of God is the only government which will hold society, against depravity within and temptation without; and this it must do by the force of its own law written upon the heart. This is that unity of the Spirit and that bond of peace which can alone perpetuate national purity and tranquility — that law of universal and impartial love by which alone nations can be kept back from ruin. There is no safety for republics but in self-government, under the influence of a holy heart, swayed by the government of God. — from *The Spirit of the Pilgrims*.

Lyman Beecher (1775–1863) was a Presbyterian minister and, serving as a sort of Billy Graham of his day, a preacher who rose to national prominence in part because of his efforts at cofounding the American Temperance Society. Beecher would father 13 children — many of whom would become famous in their own right — including abolitionists Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom’s Cabin, and Henry Ward Beecher. He is considered the leader of the Second Great Awakening — which popularized revivalist meetings.