

But a number of separatist bodies felt the platform suggested by Wright was too broad and called for a federation that would have been more strict in adherence to the principles mentioned earlier in this course. It was felt that a stronger structure would give a better contrast to the FCC and so early in 1941 the American Council was developed through the collective action of the Bible Presbyterian and Bible Protestant churches.

At the onset the ACC had rather broad support beyond the small denominations that convened it and would be joined by the GARBC and the IFCA and about twenty other small but separatist bodies. It would maximize at about 1 and 1/2 million members before internal disturbances would severely handicap its activities. Among those who sponsored it in the earlier days (beyond its immediate officers) were Will Houghton of Moody Bible Institute, W.W. Ayre of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City, Vernon Grounds, George Mundell, J.O. Buswell, etc. A considerable number of fundamentalist leaders of several denominational headings was involved.

In organization a constitution was adopted in 1941 with a broadly based doctrinal statement reaffirming the fundamentals. A structure was devised that promised no interference with local churches and denominations and offered no attempt to "bring them together" into one ecclesiastical structure.

The aims of the body were multiple including these:

- to challenge legal enactments that infringed on religious freedom.
- to warn Christians of the apostasy of the modern day
- to give united testimony to the Gospel and Christian love
- to provide a base and setting for fellowship of those who were set for the defense of the faith.

The original membership had three categories: 1) groups (or denominations) of churches that were in agreement with the doctrinal commitment and were not in league with the FCC, etc. 2) individual churches separate from the FCC, and 3) individual Christians who wished to indicate that the ACC represented them in public matters rather than the FCC...most of these being conservative Christians in Federal Council churches. The latter group was non voting and the membership structure has changed over the years although this general pattern continues.

The major activities of the American council included: