

**DRAFT OF GENERAL CONFERENCE MEMORIAL
MINISTER AND MARRIAGE (3108)**

WHEREAS, it is a clear Biblical principle that leaders may be held to a higher standard than those they serve, as confirmed by the Apostle Paul in his directions to Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1-7) and Titus (Titus 1:6), and even by Proverbs 31:4-5;

WHEREAS, our revised approach to membership (Discipline 260 and 558) already allows for our church leaders to be held to a higher standard of conduct than members in general, for example in requiring abstaining from alcohol use;

WHEREAS, our Wesleyan Constitution (Discipline 265:6) affirms that the clear Scriptural grounds for divorce are the sexual sin of the spouse, so that other rationale may be understood as less than clear and not rising to the leadership standard of being “above reproach” (1 Timothy 3:2);

WHEREAS, the Discipline (3108) already provides a statement on the marriage of ministers and should provide clarity for those cases in which the minister’s marriage is dissolved on grounds other than the clear teaching of Jesus Christ (Matthew 19:8-9) or of the Apostle Paul (I Corinthians 7:10-16);

WHEREAS, consistently demonstrating our commitment to a high view on the authority of Scripture will become increasingly necessary in defending our ecclesiastical governance and biblical worldview in a post-Christian culture that calls us to compromise on sexual morality, definitions of marriage, affirming same-sex attraction, and accepting gender fluidity;

RESOLVED, that Discipline 3108 be amended by inserting the following:

or is divorced for reasons other than the sexual infidelity of their spouse (Matthew 19:8-9) or abandonment by their spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-16),

RESOLVED, that the revised paragraph 3108 shall read as follows:

4. Minister and Marriage

3108. Any minister who enters into a marriage relation contrary to the Scriptures, and to those expositions of Scripture as set forth in the Membership Commitments (265:5-7; cf. 410:5-6), ***or is divorced for reasons other than the sexual infidelity of their spouse (Matthew 19:8-9) or abandonment by their spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)***, after having been ordained, commissioned or licensed, shall be dismissed from ministerial standing, provided that guilt shall be established in accord with the judicial processes set forth in *The Discipline* (5206-5212).