

Christian Baker Finally Gets Ruling from California Court Over Lesbian Wedding Cake

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After a years-long court battle, Tastries Bakery finally has resolution from the anti-discrimination lawsuit brought against them.

Cathy Miller, owner of Tastries, declined to make a custom wedding cake for a lesbian wedding. Instead, she referred the couple to another bakery who could accommodate their needs. She cited her Christian faith as the reason she could not fulfill this request.

This refusal opened Miller up to multiple lawsuits over the course of five years.

The couple, Eileen and Mireya Rodriguez-Del Rio, were enraged when Miller referred them to another baker and filed the lawsuit against Miller. California's Department of Fair Housing and Employment also filed suit against Miller citing the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which is supposed to protect consumers from businesses that would discriminate based on race, ethnicity or religion.

Miller attempted to explain her position back in 2017 in an interview stating, "Here at Tastries, we love everyone. My husband and I are Christians, and we know that God created everyone, and He created everyone equal, so it's not that we don't like people of certain groups, there is just certain things that violate my conscience."

Finally, a Kern County judge ruled in Miller's favor. In similar fashion to the ruling of Christian baker Jack Phillips

in Colorado, Judge Eric Bradshaw ruled that Miller was protected by her First Amendment rights to freely practice her religion.

“Miller’s only motivation, at all times, was to act consistent with her sincere Christian beliefs about what the Bible teaches regarding marriage,” Judge Bradshaw wrote. “That motivation was not unreasonable, or arbitrary, nor did it emphasize irrelevant differences or perpetuate stereotypes,”

The Thomas More Society represented Miller throughout this court case, hailing it as a “First Amendment victory.”

“We applaud the court for this decision,” Thomas More Society Special Counsel Charles LiMandri said.

“The freedom to practice one’s religion is enshrined in the First Amendment, and the United States Supreme Court has long upheld the freedom of artistic expression.”

This lawsuit also highlighted the hostility that California prosecutors have when dealing with practicing Christians. During the court case, prosecutors questioned Miller’s faith, which her lawyers found particularly “disturbing.”

“Do you try to follow everything that the Bible says?” asked Anthony Mann, attorney for the California Department of Fair Housing and Employment.

“I do my best, but I’m a sinner, but I do my best,” Miller responded in court.

“Do you follow some of the eating practices from the Old Testament in terms of not eating pigs, not eating shellfish, et cetera,” Mann asked.

Thomas More Special Counsel Paul Jonna highlighted this targeted harassment in court after the verdict was delivered.

“The state was actually questioning the sincerity of Cathy’s

faith,” Jonna said. “The fact that they called Miller’s open and sincerely held beliefs into question is almost as disturbing as quibbling over her status as an artist.”

Unfortunately, much like Phillips in Colorado, Miller has not seen the last of the courtrooms for her beliefs. The plaintiffs said after the ruling that they would continue the court battle.

“Of course, we’re disappointed, but not surprised,” Eileen Rodriguez-Del Rio said. “We anticipate that our appeal will have a different result.”

If other Christian bakeries’ experiences are an indicator of what is to come, Tasteries may have more lawsuits ahead of them in California. But this has not dragged Miller down, she is leaning on her faith and God’s strength to get her and her family through the storm, while still pushing a message of peace and reconciliation.

“We appreciate your prayers and support as we joyfully continue to do business with you in the future.

“I’m hoping that in our community we can grow together,” Miller said, “and we should understand that we shouldn’t push any agenda against anyone else.” {eo}

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