

Christian Family 'Destroyed' by Government Receives Miracle Breakthrough

A Christian couple, whose two adopted sons were removed by social workers, will now have their case reopened.

The parents' appeal was heard this morning at the Royal Courts of Justice. Lady Justice King and Lord Justice Simon have allowed the appeal and have ordered a retrial of the case.

The 'Browns' are supported by the Christian Legal Centre.

'Relieved and delighted'

In allowing the appeal, Lady Justice King and Lord Justice Simon highlighted the problematic nature of the earlier judgment handed down by the family court judge. Lady Justice King particularly emphasized that the judge had failed to give proper account for his reasons in coming to his conclusion.

Speaking after the decision, Chief Executive of the Christian Legal Centre Andrea Williams said:

"We are relieved and delighted that the Court of Appeal has ordered a retrial of this case, but the battle is not over. We will continue to pursue justice for this family."

Mrs. Brown said: *"We want our children back and we will do all we can to bring them home."*

Her husband added: *"We are grateful to the Christian Legal Centre team for their continued support."*

Boys welcomed into the Browns' family

John and Mary Brown (names changed) received the two brothers into their home in 2010. Mrs. Brown, who is a former teacher

in her early sixties, had become aware of the harm that the older boy had suffered and wanted to help him and his younger brother.

'Dan' and 'Tom' were still in primary school when they went to live with the Browns. The couple legally adopted the boys in 2013. Mrs. Brown said that their birth children, who were already grown, "*loved [the boys] to pieces*" and accepted them as "*two little brothers*".

The brothers lived with their new family for nearly four years before they were taken into care in May 2014.

Because of their highly traumatic background, the boys had various behavioural issues, and the Browns were trained in dealing with them.

Tom in particular struggled with not wanting to go to school. He was doing well academically, but he was "*in a fairly heightened mood*" when his exams started.

Taken away instantly

Mrs. Brown was driving the boys to school on the day of Tom's second exam, when he reached for the steering wheel. In that moment, she pushed him back.

Tom, possibly supported by his younger brother, linked this incident with fabrications, which he told the school.

The new head teacher and his assistants had not known the boys for that long. Rather than consult with other teachers, they called social workers and the police. The boys were taken away instantly, not to be returned to their family home from that day to this.

The boys are now separated, and Tom is living in a care institution.

Their parents have been absolutely devastated by the events

and have been fighting for 20 months to get back their sons.

Speaking of the pain of separation, Mr Brown said: *"Inside, you feel grey – every day."*

Mrs. Brown added: *"I didn't wash their bed sheets for several weeks, because I could still smell them."*

Adoptive parents 'disrespected'

When their case was heard last January, the Browns said that the opinions of social workers were taken as truth by the judge.

The social workers exhibited no clear understanding of Christianity, and the Browns' parenting methods were criticized.

The primary reason the judge gave for refusing to return the children to their adoptive parents was that a psychologist's report didn't recommend the children's return.

Andrea Williams said:

"We have been unable to expose the gross injustice in this case because of the secrecy surrounding the family courts. This case is the tip of the iceberg. These wonderful parents have been greatly disrespected. The state seemed not to treat them as parents because they were adoptive parents."

"The objective evidence of the boys' progress over years seems to have been dismissed. Such a flimsy rationale for the removal of children from a loving home is appalling."

The boys were placed under a full care order.

Injustice in family courts

Commenting on the family court system, Mr. Brown said:

"Objective evidence is not required in these courts. And this

is Britain...

"The net effect is that, in this place we consider boys can be the British state."

In May 2015, the Court of Appeal granted the couple the right to appeal.

In granting the appeal, Lady Justice Black ruled that there should be a review as to whether the judge at the family court had taken the right factors into account when deciding the boys' future and whether he had failed to give proper weight to the good parenting that had been given to the children for three years prior to their forced removal.

Paul Diamond, Standing Counsel to the Christian Legal Centre, argued the Browns' case in the Court of Appeal recently. A directions hearing must now take place before Mrs. Justice Pauffley within 14 days.

Mr. Brown said: *"We believe that God is in this with us... We do believe that our boys will come back when people realise the injustice that's happened to us – but not only to us. It's happening to many people up and down this country."*

'Please pray that justice will be done

The Christian Legal Centre has seen a growing number of family cases over the last few years. Commenting on this case, Andrea Williams said:

"We are seeing a worrying trend, whereby Christian parents are being treated with suspicion because of their faith."

"The 'Browns' were treated as if they were not the 'real' parents. Their views on disciplining the children and taking them to church were wholly disrespected by the social services and the children themselves tragically taken away."

"It is time for a change regarding the secrecy surrounding

child courts. Their secretive nature means that injustices can be covered up, and it is time for this to be reviewed.

"We are grateful for the opportunity this case provides to shed light on a system that has perpetrated gross injustices against loving and fully competent parents. Please pray that justice will be done."