

Facing Financial Ruin, Christian Florist Fights Back Against Radicals

Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys have filed an appeal with a Washington court on behalf of florist Barronelle Stutzman. A state judge had earlier ruled against Barronelle for acting according to her Christian faith. ADF is standing with Barronelle and defending her free of charge. Barronelle herself has said it best—"It's me today... It's you tomorrow." With the recent increase in attacks on religious freedom, the days to take religious freedom for granted are gone.

The Washington State Attorney General's office and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) have targeted Barronelle, who is a florist, with a pair of lawsuits. They are both suing her professionally and personally and could take everything she owns—her business, her home and her personal savings.

Because she would not violate her conscience and Christian faith, Barronelle declined to create custom floral arrangements and provide wedding support for a longtime client's same-sex wedding.

She's not the only one. In just the past few years:

- Julea Ward, a graduate student at Eastern Michigan University, was expelled from the counseling program because her Christian religious beliefs prevented her from affirming same-sex relationships.
- Five pastors in Houston, Texas, had their sermons and personal communications with church members subpoenaed because they dared to speak out against a city ordinance that forced businesses to allow men and women into each others' public restrooms and created serious privacy

concerns.

- Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran was fired for his religious beliefs, despite a stellar professional career that included being appointed by President Obama to serve as the U.S. Fire Administrator for the U.S. Fire Administration.
- Memories Pizza in Indiana faced an onslaught of threats after simply telling a reporter they could not cater a same-sex wedding because of their religious beliefs.

We are living in a time when those who stand for Christian values—and especially God's plan for marriage—should not be surprised when they are targeted for their faith. If a Christian grandmother can be targeted for living out her faith, then it could happen to any of us.