

Gay Rights Activist Did What for Christian Bakery Owners?

As a gay man, Matt Stolhandske normally would not be expected to reach out to Melissa and Aaron Klein with generosity and kindness.

The Kleins are the Christian bakers in Portland, Oregon, who gained national attention last year after they refused to make a wedding cake for a lesbian couple.

But this unassuming couple is in for a big surprise as Stolhandske, a gay man who fervently disagrees with their stance on same-sex marriage, is planning to give them a large sum of money.

"The Kleins say the \$150,000 fee will bankrupt her family," Stolhandske wrote in a recent op-ed piece for the *Washington Post*. "I'm raising money to help offset that cost. I'll send whatever we raise along to the Klein family with a message of love and peace. I don't want them to suffer."

The Kleins, who have spoken publicly about their legal woes since refusing to make the cake in January 2013 and the subsequent loss of their shop, are reportedly facing a potential \$150,000 fine—a fine they say could bankrupt them.

The Kleins were forced to close their Sweet Cakes by Melissa bakery just over a year ago following intense scrutiny and furor; they're now operating out of their family home.

Additionally, the family reportedly has been harassed by those opposed to their stance on the cake matter, fielding virulent emails and phone calls.

It's clear that the debate has been a heated one, but Melissa Klein recently took to her Facebook page to address the

ongoing controversy, defend her family and to reveal what she says are the “2 huge lies” that contemporary culture has embraced.

“Our culture has accepted 2 huge lies. The first is that if you disagree with someone’s lifestyle, you must fear or hate them,” she wrote. “Second is that to love someone means that you must agree with everything they believe or do. Both are nonsense.”

Klein concluded, “You don’t have to compromise convictions to be compassionate.”