



## **An Ethical View of Bestiality and the Necessity of Christian Counseling**

### **ABSTRACT**

Bestiality, a sexual practice involving human and animal is considered a perversion in virtually every culture and society around the world. Biblical records and historical background of the church condemn acts of bestiality and considers involvement in it as immoral. In some contemporary societies however, bestiality is legalized following various ethical views which have erupted in favor of bestiality practices. Continuous push in advocacy of bestiality may lead the world into a cycle of controversy over the endorsement of a sexual perversion. Through a literary and interview approaches, bestiality is identified with mental illness, animal abuse, and gross deviation from biblical principles, acts of bestiality is associated with many ethical implications such as violation of divine order and nature, fear of reproducing abnormal off-springs, and constituting to abuse of the other creation, in this case, the animal. It was discovered that Christian counseling is needful to the people in developing understanding and obedience to the word of God, fostering growth and maturity in the Christian faith, and developing moral perspectives according to biblical principles about the sexual practice of bestiality. The recommendations of necessity of Christian counseling against bestiality are to be effected through the virtues of compassion, confrontation and control.

**Key Words:** Bestiality, Christian Counseling, Ethical View, and Necessity.

### **I. Introduction**

Sex is one of the most powerful drives in human emotional and natural expressions. As a tool of expressing gender makeup and attractiveness to the opposite sex, the phenomenon is highly significant in matters of family institution and for procreation. Although virtually every cultural orientation defines the moral code and etiquette guiding sex and sexuality (some even considering it as sacred), abuse and perversions have marked sexual expressions in various societies across the globe. Although fundamental to human continuous existence, sexual behaviors and processes in every cultural group across the globe are

increasingly creating keen concerns as the manner of sexual practice is waning. The phenomenon is continually gaining freedom in expressions tilting towards liberalism and deviating from conservative or traditional norms and customs of the societies.

In the contemporary societies of the world, virtually all sexual orientations are permissible in different nations. Sexual expressions with another human being, either with the opposite or the same sex; lesbianism, gay, bisexuality, transgender (LGBT), or homosexuality respectively, and sex with animals; bestiality, and inanimate objects are widespread. As sexual expressions get loosed, giving way to various forms of perversions, the church becomes increasingly challenged to finding ways to maintain sanity and chastity which are supposed to be exhibited in sexual conducts in every society.

In this situation, one of the traditional and major ways by which the church combats social menaces in the society is Christian counseling. This paper therefore focuses on an ethical view of bestiality and Christian Counseling. It seeks to examine the general understanding, and historical background of bestiality, it also examines an ethical view of bestiality in the contemporary time, considers the biblical view of bestiality, and examines the indispensability of Christian Counseling to bestiality.

The term bestiality in this paper is defined as a sexual perversion referring to sexual acts between the human being, whether of male or female gender and an animal which could be a lower mammal, bird, reptile or any other kind of animal. A similar term with little or no distinction from bestiality used synonymously in this paper is Zoophilia. Although Zoophilia means having love for animals, it also implies being a lover to animal. Christian Counseling is the effort of providing advice, counsel and suggestions by a Christian to the one who needs and solicited for the same from a Christian perspective. Counselors are to provide necessary help from Christian spirituality people who practice bestiality to become free from the act through processes of awareness, rehabilitation and preventive measures.

## II. General Understanding and Historical Background of Bestiality

Bestiality is described as any kind of sexual intercourse with an animal which can be committed by both sexes. Perceived as a form of sexual abuse, animal rights activists describe bestiality as sexual molestation of an animal by a human. The abuse may include acts of “vaginal, anal or oral penetration, fondling, oral-genital contact, penetration using an object, and killing or injuring an animal for sexual gratification.”<sup>1</sup> Other expressions or terms used similarly or interchangeably with bestiality include; zoophilia, zooerasty or sodomy. Fere C. identified a distinction between zoophilia or the love of animals and bestiality. In his opinion, zoophilia is not in itself a perversion because it is only an affection which unlike bestiality may be void of sexual relationship.<sup>2</sup> However, many authors use the terms interchangeably as one and the same.

Bestiality is often met with attitudes of disdain whenever it crept up in discussions especially in conservative societies around the world. Scruton, attested that topics on sexual desires was usually avoided by early philosophers and church leaders until the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and even then erotic love remained unmentioned conventionally.<sup>3</sup> If discussion on regular sexual expressions was much avoided, bestiality was much more disdained. Yet, the controversies generated in bestiality practices persist across generations globally.

Bestiality has existed from the dawn of human existence perhaps in every culture and society, globally. According to Miletski, “man has engaged in bestiality since the dawn of civilization in almost every culture and place in the world.”<sup>4</sup> In support of this view,

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Stern, “Veterinary Forensic Pathology of Animal Sexual Abuse.” In *Animal Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet*, May 11, 2016 (Accessed from [www.vactf.org](http://www.vactf.org) on 25/10/16) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, III: 1984, 532

<sup>2</sup> C. Fere, *Evolution and Dissolution of Sexual Instinct*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (Paris:, 1984), 181.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Scruton, “Sexual Desire: A Philosophical Investigation” Accessed from [www.portalconservador.com](http://www.portalconservador.com), accessed 11/11/16

<sup>4</sup> Hani Miletski, *A History of Bestiality* (Bethesda MD: EBSCO Publishing, 2005), 18.

Rossenberger, concocted that bestiality has been in existence since the 4<sup>th</sup> Glacial Age which is between 40,000 and 25,000 years ago.<sup>5</sup> Archeological discoveries revealed that bestiality was found in Babylonia Empire among the Hittites. Similarly, Richard Matteoli disclosed that Egyptian men practiced bestiality with cattle, while women did with dog. He wrote that bestiality was part of the Egyptian and Canaanites lifestyles of which the Bible warned the Hebrews not to follow their practice.<sup>6</sup> In those cultures, Harry Hoffner Jr. wrote that whereas sexual relations with some animals such as pigs, sheep or dog were punishable offences with capital punishment, such act with a horse or mule was not illegal.<sup>7</sup> Greek and Roman mythologies are also said to have widespread bestiality themes in folklore, paintings, sculptures, films, literature and pornography with bestiality impressions.<sup>8</sup> By implication, Bestiality was a sexual practice identified as concealed and formidable in many ancient cultures of the world.

In the Western society, sex with animals was thought to be therapeutic, and not unconnected with black magic or witchcraft.<sup>9</sup> However, at the Renaissance in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries, England and Sweden made bestiality and homosexuality a capital offence by burning. For instance, Oaks revealed that New England executed six men for bestiality, and hanged thirteen women and two women for witchcraft between 1642 and 1662.<sup>10</sup> This

<sup>5</sup> J. R. Rosenberger, *Bestiality* (Medco Books, 1968), 34.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Matteoli, "Bestiality and Religion" in ([www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu) accessed 14/11/16)

<sup>7</sup> Harry Hoffner Jr., "Incest, Sodomy, and Bestiality in the Ancient Near East" in Hoffner, Harry, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker (eds.) *Occident and Orient* (1973, 82).

<sup>8</sup> Bagley, (1968) in "The Wild Animal Review", 1992, Issue 5 cited by Hani Miletski, "A history of bestiality" in Andrea M. Beetz and Anthony L. Podberscek (eds.) *Bestiality and Zoophilia* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, nd.), np.

<sup>9</sup> Hani Miletski, "A History of Bestiality" in Anthony L. Podberscek, A. M. Beetz, W. Lafayette, (eds.). *Bestiality and Zoophilia: Sexual Relations with Animals*, (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2005), 11.

<sup>10</sup> R. F. Oaks, "Things Fearful to Name: Sodomy and Buggery in the Seventeenth Century New England". *Journal of Social History* 12, 1978-1979, 268.

implied that bestiality was associated with men in the way witchcraft was with women in Western culture.

In Africa, among the Massai, sexual relation with animals was not considered an offence.<sup>11</sup> Also according to Gregersen, among the Ibos in Nigeria, bestiality used to be practiced as sign of manhood.<sup>12</sup> He further cited an instance of a hunter boy who had sex with a deer among the Yoruba.<sup>13</sup> This writer, having the knowledge that bestiality is highly prohibited in Yorubaland enquired from Ogundeyi Ogundeji,<sup>14</sup> who affirmed that the hunter boy may have done that for *oogun*, or magical powers, notable practice among the Yoruba traditional hunters.<sup>15</sup> This is in agreement with Miletski on the traditional understanding of a therapeutic purpose of bestiality. However, in their contributions as Africans ethicists on sexuality, Akintunde and Ayantayo affirmed that based on their religious mindset about sex, the traditional African society forbids bestiality among other things and that anyone guilty of the act was usually excommunicated.<sup>16</sup> This annuls a position that bestiality was at any time a morally acceptable practice in any African society.

By the mid- 17<sup>th</sup> Century, cases of bestiality were traced to be more prevalent among the mentally ill persons. Mittal et al in their investigation opined that “while bestiality may be

<sup>11</sup>Midas Dekkers, *Dearest Pet: On Bestiality* (New York: Verso, 1994), accessed from [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) on 11/11/16

<sup>12</sup> Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality* (New York: Frankling Watts, 1983), 4 Accessed from [www.portalconservador.com](http://www.portalconservador.com), on 1/11/16

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>14</sup> Ogundeyi A. Ogundeji, a Nonagenarian is a Yoruba man, and a notable head hunter known across Oke-Ogun Area of Oyo State. He is from Oje-Owode and represents his community as head hunter. He has served the Old Western Region and retired as a Forestry officer in the present Oyo State, Nigeria. He took over the mantle of Head Hunter in the year 2006, after the demise of his father who occupied the chieftaincy position for more than 25years. This information was provided by him in an interactions with the writer on 18/11/16.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, Interactions with the writer on 18/11/16.

<sup>16</sup> Akintunde and Ayantayo, 2005, 5.

due to sex starvation, the person is likely to be suffering from some mental aberration.”<sup>17</sup> In line with this position, John Canup cited the cases of William Hacket and George Spencer in New England who were described as “very stupid, idle and ill-disposed”, and “one eye blemished and a loose fellow in town”<sup>18</sup> respectively. While the former was caught in sexual act with a cow, the latter confessed to have had sex with a sow who gave birth to a pig with some human resemblances to him. They were executed after the animals with which they had sex had been killed. Thus, bestiality was meted with strict penalty in the fear of it resulting in undesirable kind of offspring.

In the history of some religions, bestiality was found at some time or another. For instance, Bullough wrote that bestiality is not unconnected with Hinduism belief in transmigration of souls between animals and humans. It is believed in Hindu mythology that Mallika, wife of Prasenagit gratified herself sexually with her pet dog while the husband did the same with a goat.<sup>19</sup> He further mentioned that although bestiality is forbidden in Islam, it is evident that the practice was common in the Arab world.<sup>20</sup> Christianity however forbade bestiality completely. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the early church began kicking against it not only among Christians but also in their entire society as the resulted offspring in the mating of human and animal were regarded as beasts.<sup>21</sup> The church therefore has the responsibility to curtail a resurgence of the misdemeanor from the society.

<sup>17</sup> Mittal et. al, 2000, 95.

<sup>18</sup> John Canup, “The Cry of Sodom Enquired Into’: Bestiality and the Wilderness of Human Nature in Seventeenth-Century New England” accessed from [www.americanatiquarian.org](http://www.americanatiquarian.org) on 28/11/16

<sup>19</sup> Vern L. Bullough, *Sexual Variance in Society and History* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976), np.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*).

<sup>21</sup> J. E. Salisbury, “Bestiality in the Middle Ages” in Salisbury, J. E. (ed.). *Sex in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, Science (1994), 85-86

### III. Biblical and Theological View of Bestiality

Sexuality and sex is a natural gift of God to His creation; for “male and female He created them” (Gen.1: 27b, NIV). According to Matthews Ojo, the creation account in Genesis 1: 26 showed that the human was distinctly created with gender, and biological responsibility of procreation and productivity differences.<sup>22</sup> Thus, human sexuality not only represents their being in the image of God, but also an expression of their affinity for one another for reproducing the same likeness with God. However, writing on sex as a natural and God given instinct, De Moss whined saying;

I cannot think of any gift of God that has been more abused and misused than that of sex. What was intended to be a stunning, pure, earthly picture of amazing heavenly, eternal realities has been perverted into an align but false god that is in fact a grotesque caricature of the true God.<sup>23</sup>

Sex is being abused and perverted in many degraded forms, contrary to biblical standards and societal norm. The Bible gives specific instructions regarding sex and sexual intercourse and it is not silent on the issue of bestiality. Although Christianity does not accept bestiality, it had to deal with the issue both in the Old Testament and in the early Church as bestiality was noticed as part of lifestyle of people with whom the Israelites lived in Canaan.

In the Old Testament, there are texts which specifically and directly prohibit human having sex with animals and there are those which by implication speak against it. It is particularly categorized as sexual immorality, the violation of which attracts capital punishment. In Exodus 22:19 and Leviticus 20:15-16, anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death; “Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal is to be put to death” (Ex. 22:19, NIV), and

<sup>22</sup> Matthews Ojo, “Religion and Sexuality: Individuality, Choice and Sexual Right in Nigerian Christianity” in *Understanding Human Sexuality Seminar Series 4, Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Center (ARSRC)*, NP, 2005: 5.

<sup>23</sup> Nancy Leigh De Moss, “About the Book” in John Piper and Justin Taylor (eds.) *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*. (Illinois: Cross Way Books, n.d), 107.

If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he must be put to death, and you must kill the animal. If a woman approaches an animal to have sexual relations with it, kill both the woman and the animal. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads (Lev. 20:15-16, NIV).

Positing sex as a tool for procreation labels bestiality as confusion. This is analogic to other sexual perversions in Leviticus 20:12 such as sexual relationship between a man and his daughter-in-law. This is so according to Keiser because human being created in the image of God should maintain distinctly the divine privilege by which human exhibit dominion over beast to which a lowering of honor is demonstrated by sexual acts with the animal.<sup>24</sup> Such act is distinctly unnatural. Those who are identified with God and bear His image and likeness are not to be associated with acts of bestiality; it is bewilderment. The Israelites were warned in the Holiness Code as “You must not live according to the customs of the nations I am going to drive out before you. Because they did all these things, I abhorred them.” (Lev. 20:23, NIV). The Christian and all who affirm that they bear the image of God are to live discreetly and desist from every sexual perversion such as bestiality.

The Bible clearly shows that God detests bestiality. According to Flanagan, “there is an impressive biblical chain involving God as Creator, King, and Lawgiver, in His plan for human life; from creation to the coming of the kingdom, [sexual perversion] behavior has no place.”<sup>25</sup> Bestiality is categorized among sexual deviances in Leviticus with warnings and curses including; “do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. A woman must not present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it: that is a perversion.” (18:23, NIV). Similarly, “cursed is the man who has sexual relations with an

<sup>24</sup> Kaiser Walter, *Towards Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 114.

<sup>25</sup> D. Flanagan, “Pastoral Response in the Local Church” in Brown, Paul. E. (ed.) *Homosexuality: Christian Truth and Love* (Leominster Day One Publications, 2007), 122.



animal.” (Deut.27: 21, NIV). By implication, bestiality was a common phenomenon in the ancient world of the Old Testament indicating the several references to it in the Law.

#### IV. Contemporary Ethical Views of Bestiality

In the contemporary sense there are at least two schools of thought as whether bestiality is a perversion or none. Each of the notions presents arguments to back up the position taken. Major arguments to the pro-bestiality view hinge on the killing of animals for food, as beasts of burden, in sporting events, zoo keeping, and in artificial insemination or other research purposes.<sup>26</sup> This perspective argues that if the use of animals for nutritional or scientific research purposes is not considered as ethically wrong, then having animals for sexual gratification could not be either. Yet, the human cannot refute the natural instinct and ability to distinguish between moral acts and vicious conducts in their relationship or use of animals. In a research conducted by Harlow H. F., on development of sexual behavior of the monkey, Nina Lee Colwill and Holbein S. W. reported that biologically mediated sex produced different responses in severe social deprivation, implying that animal to human sexual behavior does not occur naturally.<sup>27</sup> This means that under normal circumstance, the human and the lower animal would not consider developing sexual attractions for each other. Thus, sexual stimuli from human to animal and vice versa is considered abnormal, calling for counseling.

The progenitors of bestiality as a sexual perversion viewed the notion that the act is unnatural. James Martell explained the unnatural label as being in two folds; firstly because people find the act as repugnant and disgusting, and secondly because the act is “degrading to

<sup>26</sup> Roger Scruton, *Animal Rights and Wrongs* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2004), 66.

<sup>27</sup> H. F. Harlow, cited by Nina Lee Colwill, and S. W. Holbein, “Sex and Sexuality” in Hillary M. Lips and Nina Lee Colwill (eds.) *The Psychology of Sex Difference*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), 277-278.

the person and dishonoring to humanity”<sup>28</sup> Sigmund Freud however concluded that a disposition to perversions is an original and universal nature of the human sexual instinct and that people who are behaviorally abnormal are always sexually abnormal but that many people who are normal behaviorally otherwise are sexually abnormal also.<sup>29</sup> This means, sexual perversion could probably be an instinct built naturally in the human. However, it is important to be reminded that God, who created the human in His own image and likeness is not an originator of confusion embedded in acts of bestiality.

Sexuality is a personal gift of God to humankind. It is important however that the will and choice to control this God-given nature be utilized positively. Sexual desires are to be controlled and adjusted to avoid negative and disordered expressions. Inordinate affections have the tendency to lead to abuses and exploitations. According to Jacobson, “classifying sexual orientation as a human right may lead to legalization of [twenty one] 21 or more sexually deviant behaviors and the destruction of the family.”<sup>30</sup> If the family is damaged in any way, the society will completely come to ruin. In similar prediction, Matthews Ojo, affirmed that “contemporary evil in the society is partly associated with sexual perversion, which if left to proceed unchallenged could destabilize the society.”<sup>31</sup> Bestiality is such a contemporary menace which must be curtailed to avoid further moral degeneration in the society.

Bestiality is considered illegal in many countries of the world. In some European countries including Denmark, it is outlawed while it remains legal some other nations such as

<sup>28</sup> James Martell, “what is wrong with having sex with animals?” [www.inter-disciplinary.net](http://www.inter-disciplinary.net), accessed on 10/11/16).

<sup>29</sup> Freud Sigmund, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 155.

<sup>30</sup> T. W. Jacobson, “Focus on the Family” [www.idppcentre.com](http://www.idppcentre.com). Accessed on 28/11/16

<sup>31</sup> Matthews Ojo, “Religion and Sexuality: Individuality, Choice and Sexual Right in Nigerian Christianity” in *Understanding Human Sexuality Seminar Series 4, Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Center (ARSRC)*, NP, 2005,np.

Hungary, Finland and Romania.<sup>32</sup> The Canadian legal sector defined bestiality to include not only penetration of sex organs but also any contact with sexual purposes.<sup>33</sup> In Germany, bestiality is legal unless the animal is forced.<sup>34</sup> From the perspective of an African, Matthews Ojo noted that sexual morality is relative in the West, defined as whether the partners consented and derived fun from the act or otherwise.<sup>35</sup> In the former, no crime may have been committed while in the latter, the opposite applied. To approve of sexual activity with an animal so long as the animal consents to the act is abnormal and obnoxious. It is an infringement on the right of the animal and conflicts the law of nature.

There are various ethical implications associated with bestiality in the contemporary societies. In a research conducted to evaluate over 44,000 adults males for sexual misconducts, Mary Lou Randour discovered that bestiality was the single largest risk factor and strongest predictor of increased risk for committing child sexual abuse.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, from personal experiences as Counselors to prostitutes, Daniel Adeniji and Lydia Adeniji opined that homosexuality and prostitution; considered as other forms of sexual perversions may lead to bestiality practices.<sup>37</sup> Therefore bestiality constitutes to a large extent a moral phenomenon generally accepted as a perversion in many societies globally. Such needs

<sup>32</sup> “Denmark passes law to ban bestiality” in Life of 22 April, 2015. Accessed from [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk). On 20/02/2019.

<sup>33</sup> Graeme Wood, “All sexual acts with animals now illegal in Canada with new bestiality law” in *Vancouver Courier* of June 20, 2019. Accessed from [www.vancourier.com](http://www.vancourier.com) on January 12, 2020.

<sup>34</sup> Arul Arggrawal, *Forensic and medico-Legal Aspects of Sexual Crimes and Unusual Sexual Practices* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2009), np.

<sup>35</sup> Matthews Ojo, 2005, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Abel and Mary Lou, Randour , “What every Christian should know about the link between Pet Abuse and Family Violence” in American Psychological Association Education Directorate [www.apa.org/education/ice/pet-abuse-family-violence](http://www.apa.org/education/ice/pet-abuse-family-violence) accessed 11/11/16.

<sup>37</sup> Daniel Adeniji and Lydia Adeniji are missionaries of the Global Missions Board of the Nigerian Baptist Convention to Burkina Faso. Daniel Adeniji is an ordained minister of the NBC. The couple has been in Burkina Faso as missionaries among prostitutes since 2007. They were interviewed by this writer after reading a booklet they wrote; via a telephone on 27/01/17.

arouse the necessity for the intervention of the church through the ministry of Christian counseling.

#### V. Necessity for Christian Counseling against Bestiality

Globally, efforts to curb sexual perversions, particularly bestiality have traditionally depended mostly upon the church. From history it is gathered that the early church fathers added prohibition of bestiality as conversion requirements to Christianity.<sup>38</sup> Miletski disclosed that St. Thomas Aquinas identified bestiality as the most dangerous of four kinds of unnatural vices including homosexuality, intercourse in 'unnatural position' and masturbation in the order of severity.<sup>39</sup> As a phenomenon that has existed since the Hebrews received the Law and for which reason a prohibition was included in the Holiness Code, bestiality in the opinion of this writer is an ethical failure of which the Christian is not to be associated.

Christian counseling is a ministry of help. Brammer Lawrence described it as an umbrella housing psychotherapy, and as a process of assisting a person to grow towards higher level of self-actualization.<sup>40</sup> In their own definition, Ivey and Simek noted that "Counseling is a more intensive process concerned with assisting normal people to achieve their goals or function more effectively"<sup>41</sup> Further, Lyall defines Christian counseling as "that activity which seeks to help people towards constructive change and growth in any and every aspect of their lives."<sup>42</sup> Hence, in Christian counseling, transformational experience is

<sup>38</sup> R. F. Oaks, "Things Fearful to Name: Sodomy and Buggery in the Seventeenth Century New England". *Journal of Social History* 12, 1978: 268-281.

<sup>39</sup> Miletski, 2005, 32.

<sup>40</sup> Lawrence M. Brammer, *The Helping Relationship Process and Skills* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1979), 14.

<sup>41</sup> Allen E. Ivey, and Lynn Simek, *Downing Counseling and Psychotherapy: Skills, theories and Practice*. (London: Practice-Hall Intervention, Inc. 1980), 13.

<sup>42</sup> D. Lyall, *Integrity of Pastoral Care* 9 Wiltshire, GB: Cromwell, 2001), 13.

expected from negative behavioral acts considered as immoral to the positive or morally acceptable.

Generally, all Christians are called to be burden bearers for one another. For instance, the church is charged to “teach and admonish one another” (Col.3:16, NIV), “encourage the disheartened, help the weak,” (IThes.5:14, NIV), and to “carry each other’s burdens,” (Gal.6:2, NIV). Many biblical references emphasize the need to assist, help, encourage, support, and admonish, other people particularly, those who are of the household of the faith. These are all responsibilities attached to Christian counseling. In his analysis, Ayankeye opined that “pastors in particular and Christian workers in general are in a kind of vocation [counseling] that always make them to come across persons whose lives are twisted and confused.”<sup>43</sup> He went further that Christian counselors are doled with the responsibility of putting people through and overcoming past abuses, changing their perspective of life, getting rid of inner conflicts to pursue a healthy and new direction in life.<sup>44</sup> It implies that Christian counseling involves facilitating understanding and obedience to God, in all aspects of human lives including sex and sexuality in people who may be having problem doing so.

If Christian counseling serves as an umbrella, pastoral counseling is certainly an essential aspect of helping people to do the right. According to Connolly, pastoral counselors “are like spiritual directors to work with sexually perverse.”<sup>45</sup> In his suggestion, the counselor needs to establish restoration of trust, awareness of issues and emotions, forgiveness, reduced defensiveness and reduced shame in the counselee.<sup>46</sup> Pastoral counseling therefore is saddled with both pastoral duties and counseling from Christian perspective. The essence of Christian

<sup>43</sup> S.O. Ayankeye, *Counseling Practicum: A Handbook for Christian Counselors* (Ibadan: Baptist Press (Nig.) Limited 2013), 6.

<sup>44</sup> Ayankeye, 6.

<sup>45</sup> Connolly, 2013, 9.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.,

counseling is to encourage maturity and growth in Christ likeness, therefore, the Bible is the major tool from which Christian counseling is based and applied.

Christian counseling is identified as essential ministry of the church which Pretorius and van As, observed as having more to offer in that it takes care of the body, mind and spirit than psychoanalysis which takes care mainly of the mind or emotions.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Christian counselor is empathetically obliged and motivated to help the counselee to become a more independent and morally intelligent individual in making right choices and morally acceptable decisions to the society and by God, the Creator. In essence, the Christian counselor is tasked with the responsibility to disclose biblical injunction against the practice of bestiality wherever it is prevalent.

In regards to sexual perversion as in the case of bestiality, Genge and Cristian affirmed that:

as sex and sexual issues are discussed with greater openness, counselors are more frequently involved in helping clients' resolve personal sexual issues ranging from birth control, abortion and sexual dysfunction to sexual preference.<sup>48</sup>

In any cases of sexual dysfunctional attitude or perversion, the Christian counselor is to be a constructive helper. According to Ivey and Simek, Christian counseling is tasked with an ultimate goal of building an increased response capacity and ability to create new behaviors and thoughts in the counselee.<sup>49</sup> Hence, the sexually perverse could be encouraged to develop a morally refined mindset which tallies with Christian values and promote biblical principles regarding sexual conducts.

<sup>47</sup> F. J. Pretorius and K.H. van As, "The Need for more Christian Counsellors" in KOERS 68 (2&3) 2003: 291. Accessed from [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net) on 09/07/2020.

<sup>48</sup> R. L. Genge, and T. S. Cristian, *Theory, Methods and Processes of Therapy* (New Jersey Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981), 232.

<sup>49</sup> Ivey and Simek, 1980, 15.

To this end, the goal of Christian counseling for bringing out the best in everyone unto self- realization for good conduct in the society through the following processes.

1. Compassion: the act of showing love, care, or concern to the needy even when it is not convenient to do so constitute a significant element in Christian counseling. In his recommendation, Brammer presented what he termed as “Reflecting Feelings”<sup>50</sup> which Ivey and Simek-Downing called “empathy.”<sup>51</sup> This could be described as cluster skills expressed by the Christian counselor in affirmation of deep concerns on the situation of the counselee. As it applies to Bestiality practices, the skill cluster of being compassionate is to get involved in the life of another with the goal of bringing healing and wholeness. To be available in empathetic mode would help the counselor assist the counselee in developing a morally acceptable mindset on sexual practice.

2. Confrontation: Christian counseling considers the spiritual dimension to the problems of the counselee as paramount as “spiritual ends require spiritual means.”<sup>52</sup> According to Brammer, this involves helping the counselee to honestly and directly recognize the effects, challenges, exposure as well as threats involved in their situation.<sup>53</sup> To do this in combating sexual perversions, Christian counseling must emphasize the place of developing relationship with God. According to Daniel and Lydia Adeniji, from their experiences as Christian counselors to people who practiced bestiality, the starting point for therapy is spiritual. In an interview with the couple, it was affirmed that the starting point is showing the way of salvation. In their words, “Jesus Christ, first, before any other thing is attached to

<sup>50</sup> Brammer,

<sup>51</sup> Ivey and Simek, 107.

<sup>52</sup> William C. Bier, “Religious Counseling: The Roman Catholic Church” in R. K. Hall and J. A. Lanwerys (eds.) *The Yearbook of Education*, Yonkers: World Book, 1981:234.

<sup>53</sup> Brammer, 1979, 83.

therapy.”<sup>54</sup> By these, sexual perversion thoughts are altogether avoided and treated. The counselee must be confronted in what is most needful; the decision to develop relationship with God through the Savior, Jesus Christ. Writing on the same subject in their booklet, *My Night in Sodom and Gomorrah*, they noted that separating the counselee from the object of sexual perversion, which in the case of bestiality, an animal, is essential.<sup>55</sup> Through the activities of Christian counseling, object of sexual attraction help could be kept far away from to reduce or eliminate the urge to keep falling into the act of bestiality.

Counseling agencies such as the Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA) have records of people who have been helped out of sexual addictions which may also be applied to bestiality. A primary concern of the agency is expressed by the coordinators as; “that the suffering sex and love addicts may find the way, through the Twelve Step program, to turn from self -destruction of this disease and lay the foundation for spiritual and emotional recovery.”<sup>56</sup> The testimonies of those who have received counseling through this agency are encouraging and helpful for all who are willing to desist from pervasive sexual acts including bestiality. Acknowledging the Higher Power and Spiritual Being, God to help in the process of counseling is essential.

3. Control: Christian counseling emphasizes the application of faith-based principles to resolving issues of mental illness and morality flaws. While depending significantly on the help of God, adjustment to gaining control over the situation and coping through every step of counseling or therapy as the case may be are necessary. In being in control and coping, Christian counseling would help the counselee to uncover underlying issues which may be

<sup>54</sup> Daniel and Lydia Adeniji: interviewed on 27/01/17).

<sup>55</sup> Daniel Adeniji and Lydia Adeniji, *My Night in Sodom and Gomorrah*, 2015, 30.

<sup>56</sup> (SLAA, 2007:124). Twelve Steps Program of the Alcoholic Anonymous for Addictions including Sex and Love Addictions culled from the Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Fellowshipwide Service, inc. 1990.



responsible or a contributory factor to the sexual misdemeanor or mental illness leading into bestiality. By providing the needed support and comfort through prayers, sharing the word of God, and affirmation of presence, Christian counseling would encourage the counselee to maintain love for God and abhor acts which are detestable to God such as bestiality.

## VI. Conclusion

Sex as a natural and emotional expression of love and affection between two opposite genders of the same specie or family in the animal kingdom, is expected to be practiced within a morally defined setting particularly among the humankind. Deviations from the socio-cultural and religious ethical standards result into perversions. Looking through the general understanding of bestiality, its historical background, contemporary ethical view, and biblical position, it is obvious and clear that bestiality has been a serious sexual orientation which is accepted as a perversion through all history. Although some contemporary culture and societies are losing their conservative ethical views on sex and sexuality expressions, bestiality, remains a detestable practice in many societies, religious bodies and particularly, the church. The thrust for recognition and advocacy to legalize bestiality in some countries of the world is a major concern to the church which poses a responsibility for Christian Counseling.

Christian counseling has a great role to play if the society and the church would be rid of immoral acts of sexual perversion. This must begin from the first human institution which is the family. Christian counseling is tasked with providing guidance against sexual perversions and for sexual acts to be conducted morally in accordance with biblical principles. Bestiality practice is to remain detestable in every society as those who are addicted to the act either as a result of ill health or other reasons are to seek for help through

Christian counseling for a transformed life guaranteed in receiving the love of God through Jesus Christ.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adeniji, Daniel and Adeniji, Lydia. *My Night in Sodom and Gomorrah* Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: Lydia House & the Open Seminary, 2015.
- Akintunde, D. O. and Ayantayo, J. K. "Sexuality and Spirituality: Possible Bedmates in the Religious Terrain in Contemporary Nigeria" *Understanding Human Sexuality Seminar Series 4*, Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (2005).
- Arggawal, Arul. *Forensic and medico-Legal Aspects of Sexual Crimes and Unusual Sexual Practices*, Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2009.
- Ayankeye, S. O. *Counseling Practicum: A Handbook for Christian Counselors*, Ibadan: Baptist Press (Nig.) Limited 2013.
- Bagley, (1968) in "The Wild Animal Review", 1992, Issue 5 cited by Hani Miletski, "A history of bestiality" in Andrea M. Beetz and Anthony L. Podberscek (eds.) *Bestiality and Zoophilia* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1968
- Bier, William C. *Religious Counseling: The Roman Catholic Church in the Yearbook of Education*, ed. R. K. Hall and J. A. Lanwerys Yonkers: World Book, 1955.
- Brammer, Lawrence M. *The Helping Relationship Process and Skills* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc. 1979.
- Bullough, Vern L. *Sexual Variance in Society and History* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.
- Canup, John. "The Cry of Sodom Enquired Into': Bestiality and the Wilderness of Human Nature in Seventeenth-Century New England" from ([www.americanantiquarian.org](http://www.americanantiquarian.org).) accessed on 28/11/16
- Colwill, Nina Lee, and Holborn, Stephen W. "Sex and Sexuality" in Hillary M. Lips and Nina Lee Colwill (eds.), *The Psychology of Sex Difference*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978.
- Connolly, Andrew. "Sexual Addiction and Spiritual Direction" in *Spiritual Director Formation Program of Spiritual Growth Ministries*, Aotearoa, New Zealand, 2013.
- Dekkers, Midas. *Dearest Pet: On Bestiality* (New York: Verso, 1994), accessed from [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) on 11/11/16
- De Moss, Nancy Leigh (n.d). "About the Book" in John Piper and Justin Taylor (eds.) *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*. Illinois: Cross Way Books.

“Denmark passes law to ban bestiality” in Life of 22 April, 2015. Accessed from [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) On 20/02/2019.

Fere, C. *Evolution and Dissolution of Sexual Instinct*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Paris, 1984

Flanagan, D. “Pastoral Response in the Local Church” in Brown, Paul. E. (ed.) *Homosexuality: Christian Truth and Love*, Leominster Day One Publications, 2007. (120-137).

Genge, Rickey L. and Cristiani Therese Stridle. *Theory, Methods and Processes of Therapy* New Jersey Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981.

Gregensen, Edgar. *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*, New York: Frankling Watts, 1983. Accessed from [www.portalconservador.com](http://www.portalconservador.com), on 1/11/16

Harlow, H. F. cited by Nina Lee Colwill, and S. W. Holbein, “Sex and Sexuality” in Hillary M. Lips and Nina Lee Colwill (eds.) *The Psychology of Sex Difference*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978.

Hoffner, Harry Jr. (1973) “Incest, Sodomy, and Bestiality in the Ancient Near East” in *Occident and Orient*. eds. Hooffner, Harry, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker.

Ivey, Allen E. and Simek Lynn. *Downing Counseling and Psychotherapy: Skills, theories and Practice*. London: Practice-Hall Intervention, Inc., 1980.

Jacobson, T. W. “Focus on the Family” [www.idppcentre.com](http://www.idppcentre.com). Accessed on 28/11/16

Lefebune, Marcus O. P. (1985). *Human Experience and the Art of Counseling*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark Ltd.

Martell, James. “what is wrong with having sex with animals?” ([www.interdisciplinary.net](http://www.interdisciplinary.net)) accessed 10/11/16

Matteolli, Richard. “Bestiality and Religion” in [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu). Accessed 11/11/16

Miletski, Hani. “A History of Bestiality” in Anthony L. Podberscek, A. M. Beetz, W. Lafayettey, (eds.). *Bestiality and Zoophilia: Sexual Relations with Animals*, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2005: (18-

Oaks, R. F. “Things Fearful to Name: Sodomy and Buggery in the Seventeenth Century New England”. *Journal of Social History* 12, 1978, pp.268-281.

Ojo, Mathews. “Religion and Sexuality: Individuality, Choice and Sexual Right in Nigerian Christianity” in *Understanding Human Sexuality Seminar Series 4, Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Center (ARSRC)*, NP, 2005.

Pretorius, F. J. and van As, K.H., “The Need for more Christian Counsellors” in KOERS 68 (2&3) 2003: (279-293). Accessed from [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net) on 09/07/2020.

Randour, Abel and Mary Lou. “What every Christian should know about the link between Pet Abuse and Family Violence” in American Psychological Association Education Directorate ([www.apa.org/education/ice/pet-abuse-family-violence](http://www.apa.org/education/ice/pet-abuse-family-violence)) accessed 11/11/16

Rossenberger, Joseph R. *Bestiality*, 1st Edition Medco Books, 1968.

Salisbury, J. E. "Bestiality in the Middle Ages" in Salisbury, J. E. (ed.). *Sex in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, Science (1994). pp.85-86

Scruton, Roger. "Sexual Desire: A Philosophical Investigation" 5. (www.portalconservador.com), accessed 11/11/16

\_\_\_\_\_. *Animal Rights and Wrongs*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2004.

Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* New York: Basic Books, 1962.

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, "Twelve Steps Program of the Alcoholic Anonymous for Addictions including Sex and Love Addictions" culled from the Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Fellowship Wide Service, Inc. 2007:124.

Stern, A. W. "Veterinary Forensic Pathology of Animal Sexual Abuse." In Animal Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet, May 11, 2016 (Accessed from [www.vactf.org](http://www.vactf.org). on 25/10/16)

Walter, Kaiser. *Towards Old Testament Ethics*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1983.

Wood, Graeme "All sexual acts with animals now illegal in Canada with new bestiality law" in Vancouver Courier of June 20, 2019. Accessed from [www.vancourier.com](http://www.vancourier.com) on January 12, 2020.

#### Interviews

Daniel Adeniji and Lydia Adeniji. Missionaries of the Nigerian Baptist Convention among Prostitutes in Burkina Faso. Lydia House. Interviewed via telephone on 27/01/17

Ogundeyi (90). Chief Hunter of Ogundeyi Compound, Oje-Owode in Oke –Ogun Area, Shaki East Local Government of Oyo State, Nigeria. Interviewed on 18/11/16