



# Go Deeper Guide

(for Individuals and Groups)



You can download a printable version of this guide for free at <http://holleygerth.com/books-and-more/>.

## *A Note from Holley*.....

*Hello, Friend!*

*I'm so glad you're taking time to go deeper into this book. We're all wired a bit differently, so I wanted to share some ideas for ways you can do so:*

- 1. Go through the questions on your own. You can write the answers below, get a printable version from [holleygerth.com](http://holleygerth.com), or use a journal if you'd like more room.*
- 2. Meet a friend for coffee and talk about a chapter each time. If you love one-on-one time, then this approach may be the best fit for you. If you and your friend don't live in the same town, you can use email, the phone, or video.*
- 3. Get a group of friends together for a book club. Keep it simple. All you need is a place to meet and perhaps some snacks.*

4. *Invite the women in your family to share this journey with you. Mothers and daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, grandmas and granddaughters can all learn from each other.*
5. *Do the book as a study with your church, workplace, or organization. If you do, I may be able to record a brief video introduction for your group.*
6. *Create an online book study through your blog or a social media site like Facebook. In today's world our hearts can be together even if we live far apart.*

*While I hope this book has spoken to you personally, I believe these are truths that best become real through relationships. Reaching out and sharing your answers with others can take courage but it will help set you free. And by being open and willing to share, you'll encourage others too. We're in this together.*

## Introduction and Chapter 1:

### Why You Really Don't Have to Be Perfect

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1. How are you *really* doing, friend?

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2. When you hear the words, "You're not supposed to be perfect," what is your first response?

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3. When someone asks you, “How are you?” what do you typically say? What would you really like to be able to say if you knew it would be okay to express anything you wanted?

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4. When you read the “Lure of Perfection” section, what do you relate to most? Why?

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5. This section says, “For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy’ (Heb. 10:14). Through Jesus, we are given perfection that we could never have on our own. That’s *positional* perfection, and it allows us to stand in right relationship with God.” But in our humanity we’re still in the process of being made holy until that process is complete when we get to heaven. How does this idea fit or not fit with what you’ve always thought about what it means to be “perfect” before God?

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6. In the “Let’s Pause for a Minute” section, there’s an opportunity to begin a relationship with God and truly give him your life. Have you done that yet? If not and you’re ready to

do so, write out a prayer to him. If you have already done that, write down your faith story.

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7. What has contributed to perfectionism in your life? And who has helped you understand grace and acceptance?

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## *Chapter 2: Embracing the Freedom That's Already Yours*

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1. What's something you asked your parents' permission to do as a teenager? What was the response?

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2. How do you tend to view mistakes? What's a mistake you made that helped you learn and grow?

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3. What emotions do you typically feel when you say no? What's the difference between disappointing someone and not loving them?

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4. What's one way you tend to be different from most people that God has been able to use as part of his purpose for your life?

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5. What would you "set down" in your life if you knew it would be okay?

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6. What risk would you take if you knew you couldn't fail?

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7. What other freedoms would you add to the ones shared in this chapter? "I'm grateful God has given me the freedom to . . ."

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### Chapter 3: Trading Guilt for Grace

1. What is the difference between guilt and godly sorrow?

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2. What do you tend to feel guilty about in your life?

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3. When you look at the Guilt Cycle and the Grace Cycle, which one do you most identify with? What would help you spend even more time in the Grace Cycle?

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4. “Prayer and fellowship are among life’s richest pleasures, but let’s not stop there. Let us learn to fill our souls with beauty, art, noble achievement, fine meals, rich relationships, and soul cleansing laughter. When we acknowledge these pleasures, we acknowledge God as a genius creator of brilliant inventions. Let us be wary of a faith that denies these blessings as ‘worldly’ and unfit, as though Satan rather than God had designed them. Let us refuse to fall into the enemy’s trap of denying ourselves God’s good pleasures so that we end up deeply vulnerable to illicit pleasure.”<sup>1</sup> When you read this quote from Gary Thomas, what thoughts come

to mind? What can you more freely enjoy that God has given you as a gift?

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5. Practice moving from guilt to grace with these questions:

What's a lie you've been telling yourself?

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What's reality?

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What's the real truth?

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6. What do you have to be grateful for and praise God about?

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7. What untrue messages have you heard about guilt? What is the truth instead?

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8. What else has God revealed to your heart about guilt and grace as you've gone through this chapter?

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*Chapter 4: What Your Heart  
Really Needs Is Perfect Love*  
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1. What are you afraid will happen if you're not perfect?

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2. Only God's perfect love can rid us of our fear and free us from striving to be perfect. What lies have you believed about God's love for you, and what is really true?

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3. What messages did you receive about perfection from your father? What does God say is really true?

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4. What have friends and peers taught you about perfection? What does God say is really true?

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5. How has your husband (or your dreams about one if you're single) influenced your view of what being perfect means? What does God say is really true?

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6. How have leaders helped form your ideas about perfect performance? What does God say is really true?

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7. "People will never love us perfectly. And when they don't, it's easy to assume it's our fault. We tell ourselves, 'I'll try harder to be perfect so I can be loved.' But that's a treadmill that will lead us nowhere except to burnout and frustration." Write a prayer below telling God you're ready to get off that treadmill in any area where you may be on it and ask him to help you simply to walk with him and believe you're deeply, truly, always loved.

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## Chapter 5: The God Who Loves You More Than You Know .....

1. How is God's love different from human love?

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2. What does "being holy" mean to you? What helps you stay connected to God?

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3. When was a specific time you saw or experienced God's mercy?

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4. What is an area of your life where you're experiencing change and you really need for God to be your security?

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5. What "cracks" in your life and heart can God pour out through this week? What are some unexpected ways he might be able to use your imperfections?

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6. In the “God Is More Than We Can Even Imagine” section, which of those words are you drawn to most and why?

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7. How does knowing who God is help us remember who we are and free us from trying to be perfect?

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*Chapter 6: Daring to Be  
Who You Already Are*  
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1. Which words on the “God says you are . . .” list connect most with you? Why?

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2. What are three of your strengths and skills?

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3. “Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and

Go Deeper Guide (for Individuals and Groups)

follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?" (Matt. 16:24-26). What does it really mean to take up your cross when you're a believer?

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4. What's your love language, and how would you describe it?  
I give and receive love primarily by . . .

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5. What's your sacred pathway, and how would you describe it?  
I connect with God by . . .

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6. What's your personality type, and which Strongest Life role sounds most like you?

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7. What's one way you can learn something new about who you are to love others and glorify God this week?

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## Chapter 7: Finding Healing in Your Relationships

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1. What was one of your favorite moments in school with your peers? What was one of your hardest?

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2. What's the difference between gossip and sharing about other people in a way that's helpful?

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3. Think of a time when you were criticized. How did that experience make you feel? Now think of one when you were encouraged. How did that feel different?

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Go Deeper Guide (for Individuals and Groups)

4. There is no condemnation for us in Christ, and therefore we should never condemn each other. Write some words that describe the true identity we share. In Christ we are (example: loved, chosen, valued) . . .

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5. Read the Commitment of Words in this chapter. What phrases in it connect most with your heart, and what else would you add?

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6. Who is someone you can encourage with your words this week? How will you do so?

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7. What else can women do to help each other feel safe in friendships and relationships so there's less pressure to be perfect?

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## Chapter 8: A Practical Plan for Beating Perfectionism

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1. What's the difference between pursuing excellence and pursuing perfection?

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2. What do you believe God has put you on earth to do that no one else can? (For example, no one else can be a mama to your children or create the art you do.)

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3. Based on your answer above, what areas of your life are worth pursuing excellence in? What are some areas where “good enough” really is good enough?

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4. What's one thing you need this week, and how can you ask for help with it?

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Go Deeper Guide (for Individuals and Groups)

5. What helps you live with gratitude? What are you thankful for today?

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6. What's a risk you can take this week or something new you can try that will help you learn or grow no matter what the outcome may be?

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7. Who in your life encourages you to be real, and how do they do so?

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*Chapter 9: A New Perspective  
That Will Change Your Life*  
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1. What's the difference between legalism and grace?

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2. How would you redefine “perfect” after all you’ve read so far?

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3. Read Matthew 5 for context. What stands out to you in those verses?

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4. “Jesus sums up all of this with the ‘be perfect as God is perfect’ verse. In other words, ‘Be perfect not just on the outside but on the inside—in your heart.’ There’s only one logical response to that statement: ‘That’s impossible.’ . . . That’s exactly what Jesus wants them to realize, because he’s there to tell them they need a Savior.” How does this quote change the way you read the last verse in Matthew 5? What do you think Jesus is really trying to get people to understand?

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5. “Let’s also look at what comes right after the statement Jesus made about ‘being perfect.’ He follows those words up with, ‘Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them’ (Matt. 6:1). Jesus knows that although on one hand the people know perfection is impossible, their minds are still buzzing with new ways to

meet these requirements.” What are some ways we try to make ourselves perfect in God’s eyes and the eyes of others? What does he want us to do instead?

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6. When you look at the parts of perfection listed in this chapter, which one reassures your heart most? Why?

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7. What incorrect views of perfection have impacted your life? What is the truth you’re ready to replace those with instead?

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## *Chapter 10: The Perfect Place You’re Heading One Day*

1. Imagine waking up in Eden. What do you think a day living there would be like?

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2. When you think of heaven, what emotions do you feel? What have you been told heaven is like?

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3. What's an area of your life where you feel you fall short of your potential? How does knowing you'll fully be who you're created to be in heaven change your perspective on that area?

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4. Who are you looking forward to being with in heaven?

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5. What does "perfect intimacy with God" mean to you? What do you think you'll enjoy most about being with him in heaven?

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6. What does living "happily ever after" mean to you? What does your heart long for most?

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7. How does understanding heaven help free us from the pressure to have everything be perfect in this life?

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## *Chapter 11: Freeing Your Heart Forever*

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1. Who did you forgive in the “Letting Go of Perfection in Your Past” section? Forgiveness is a process. What can help you continue to forgive?

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2. What’s a lie you identified in the “Letting Go of Perfection in Yourself” section? What is the truth God wants your heart to hear instead?

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3. What did you tell God you’re giving him control of in the “Letting Go of Perfection in Your Future” section? What does God promise you no matter what happens?

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4. Which relationships did you release to God in the “Letting Go of Perfection in Other People” segment? How do you think doing so might begin to change those relationships?

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5. What does God want you to pursue as a life goal instead of perfection? What’s one new way you can do so starting this week?

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6. Which of the “If You Try to Be Perfect” statements spoke most to you? Why?

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7. Even after all you’ve learned and the ways you’ve grown in grace, there will still be times you come under the pressure to be perfect again. Write a note full of love and grace to yourself that you can read again in those moments. *Dear You, I always want you to remember . . .*

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