

Apparent size

- What is a **really big** object that can seem very small?
 - Andromeda galaxy → perhaps 1,000,000,000,000 stars!



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Apparent size

- What is a **really small** object that can seem very big?
 - Spider
 - A sliver

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Apparent size

- Why does the moon sometimes appear very small and sometimes very big?
 - How close or far the thing is that we compare it to



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Apparent size

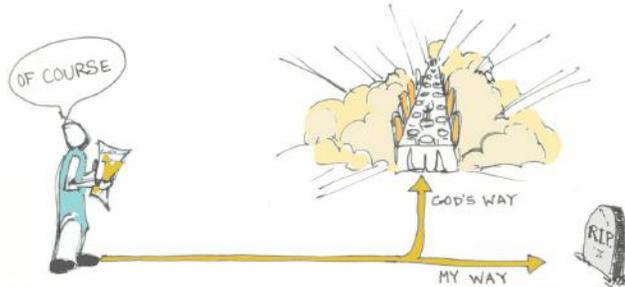
- How big or small something appears to be is a matter of perspective
- In our lives...
 - when might something very small seem like it is really big?
 - when might something very big seem like it is really small?
- Pray: ask God to help us see things for what they really are

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Accepting the Invitation

Luke 14:15–24

bib.ly/Lu14.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts



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A very unexpected idea from Jesus

The door to enter salvation (God's kingdom) is **narrow and easily missed**, even by those who really want to get in

→ How can that be?

→ If it is true, this should certainly concern us!

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Overview of key people in Luke 14

Jesus was talking to the people at a banquet

- v. 3: Jesus told the **religious law experts** that God's purpose is to be merciful
- v. 7: Jesus told the **guests** that God lifts up the humble
- v. 12: Jesus told the **host** to invite those who can't pay back
- v. 15: Jesus responded to a statement **from someone at the table** with Him
- v. 25: Jesus talked **to large crowds** traveling with Him

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Luke 14:15

When one of those at the table with him heard **this**, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

What did the man hear?

- God **mercifully heals**, even at Sabbath feasts
- God **lifts up the humble** people at feasts
- God wants hosts to **invite the lowly** to their feasts
- And God will **bless** them at the resurrection of the righteous

A key assumption in the man's statement

- **Of course everyone who has the chance will accept the invitation to be a part of God's Kingdom!**
- So what does Jesus think??**

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Luke 14:16-20

Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ **2 invitations: save the date & come now**

“But they **all alike** began to **make excuses**. The first said, ‘I have just **bought a field**, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’

another time would bring other excuses

“Another said, ‘I have just **bought five yoke of oxen**, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’

“Still another said, ‘I just **got married**, so I can’t come.’

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Luke 14:21-24

“The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the **streets and alleys** of the town and bring in **the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame**.’

“‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’

“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to **the roads and country lanes** and **compel** them to come in, so that my house will be full. **I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.**’”

Probably both the Master and Jesus

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- **The host is dishonored and is rightly angered**
 - They accepted the first invitation but made excuses at the second
- **“Invited” = “Called”**
 - Isaiah 45 emphasized the **sovereign will of God**
 - Jesus’ story emphasized **the choices of people** and **their eternal consequences**
- **The feast goes on, and the feast is full!**
 - Those **honored** with advance invitations are **excluded**
 - Those **without honor** (who cannot repay) celebrate in the **feast**
 - What kept people away?
 - Not threats and persecution
 - Perhaps they didn’t actually like the host or his ways...

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Luke 14:15-24

The man said:

→ “Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

Jesus said:

→ That is a blessing that (tragically) many will choose not to accept because they pretend they have “better” options

→ And it will be a great loss to them!

→ While many others (who are “lower” than the invited ones) will rejoice in the feast in the Kingdom of God

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The Big Idea

**God's joyous Kingdom
will be filled with many people,
especially the lowly,
while many who are invited will **choose** not to come,
to their eternal loss**

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**God has an incredible Kingdom, where He is the absolute ruler
Jesus has made a way for all people to come through Him,
including the poor, the sick, and the people I judge and I hate
And He has invited you and me to be in that Kingdom forever
Will you and I accept the invitation and come?**

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**When the choice is off in the distance, we are often willing to
say that we plan to follow God's way**

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**When the choice is much closer, our real attitudes become clearer,
and we may choose **NOT** to enter the feast in God's Kingdom
Why not???**

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Why would anyone turn down God's invitation?

Perhaps...

- We don't want to give up **our control**
 - We don't like having an all-powerful God
 - We don't like it when He gives authority to others over us
 - We don't like it when He sets His own rules

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Why would anyone turn down God's invitation?

Perhaps...

- We don't want to give up **our control**
- We don't want to give up **our pride**
 - We don't like the other people He has let in
 - We don't like being told that we are no more worthy of getting in than the lowly people He is letting in
 - We don't like being told that we can never fix **our** problems

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Why would anyone turn down God's invitation?

Perhaps...

- We don't want to give up **our control**
- We don't want to give up **our pride**
- We don't want to give up **our stuff or dreams or pleasures**
- We don't want to let go of **our hurts or anger**

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We can hide the glory of God behind our thumb, and tell ourselves that it is better to go our own way than God's way!

Instead of trusting the loving, glorious, life-giving presence of God we often choose...

- our desire for pleasure
- our pride
- our illusion of control
- our self-centeredness
- our "wisdom"
- our traditions



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The Big Idea

**God's joyous Kingdom
will be filled with many people,
especially the lowly,
while many who are invited will choose not to come,
to their eternal loss**

**The Spirit of God pleads with you and me:
don't miss any opportunity to be in the life-giving, joy-giving
presence of God!**

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Application

Choose to accept the invitation to the feast in the Kingdom of God

- Every person has a choice to make
- Either we submit to the all-powerful, all-good God...
 - who can do whatever He wants with us or anyone else
 - who says that we are just as unworthy as anyone else to be a part of His family
 - yet He loves us anyways, so much...
 - that He abandoned His Son to suffer and die on the cross to open a way for us to be with Him forever
 - yet to enter we must choose Him before anything and everyone else
- Or we die a bit more every day
 - moving a step closer to inevitable disaster and death alone, forever

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Application

Choose to accept the invitation to the feast in the Kingdom of God

- Once for all
 - Jesus is all good, and I am not
 - Jesus is all wise, and I am not
 - Jesus is all powerful, and I am not
 - I don't deserve His love
 - Yet He offers it anyway
 - Will you accept today this incredible offer to be in the feast in the Kingdom of God forever?
 - This is True
 - This is Good
 - He is Love

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Application

Choose to accept the invitation to the feast in the Kingdom of God

- Once for all
- Daily
 - Many times every day, we must choose whether to "seek first" the Kingdom of God or the kingdom of our own desires or plans
 - Sadly, we often seem to think that...
 - We are wiser than He is
 - We are a better judge of what is good than He is
 - Our ways are better than His
 - Sadly we so often turn down the invitation to walk with God
 - Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." *Luke 9:23*

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Application

Choose to accept the invitation to the feast in the Kingdom of God

- **What pulls you away from following Jesus?**
 - Some will face threats and persecution
 - For most of us, the greater concern is being tempted by **miserably inadequate** alternatives
 - What can compare with the limitless love, beauty, glory, and joy of the Creator of life and the Savior of people like us?
 - Yet every day, we cover up the glory of God with our selfish pride and concerns

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The Big Idea

**God's joyous Kingdom
will be filled with many people,
especially the lowly,
while many who are invited will **choose not to come,**
to their eternal loss**

- **Unimaginably great blessings are promised to those who accept the invitation to walk with God**
- **What is holding you back today?**
 - **Once for all** → to be in the family of God forever
 - **Day by day** → to live in fellowship with God your Father

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The man said:

→ "Blessed is the one who will eat
at the feast in the kingdom of God."

The question is:

- **Will you accept the free invitation to join in that feast?**
 - **Once for all**
 - **Day by day**
- **For the feast will be full, and it will be unimaginably great!**

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