

## Trying to Keep Up With the Neighbors

### CONNECT

Share about a time when someone you know had a success, and it made you jealous or anxious. Then share a time when someone you know had a success, and you were able to rejoice with them.

### DISCUSS

Have someone read the verses below. As you listen, are there any words or phrases that especially strike you? What questions come to your mind about what it says? Is there anything that is confusing? Encouraging?

<sup>1</sup> But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine... <sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior... <sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you...”  
(Isaiah 43:1–4 NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, you have searched me and known me. <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. <sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely. <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. <sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, <sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. (Psalm 139: 1–4, 7–10, 13–14 NRSV)

1. How would you describe God’s posture towards his people in these passages?
2. If you were to embrace the truth about God’s love for you found in Isaiah 43:1–4 and Psalm 139, how do you think it would affect your view of yourself? How would it affect the way you view other people and how you treat them?
3. What practical ideas do you have for how we can be more influenced by God’s view of us than by what other people think of us or by how we compare ourselves with others?

### PRAY AND PERSONALIZE IT

1. Which aspects of Christian’s sermon and the passages we’ve explored would you most like to apply to your life?
2. What step(s) do you want to take this week to help you stop comparing yourself with others and embrace God’s love for you?
3. How can we pray for you?