

Introduction:

1. When have you been surprised by a hostile relationship turning into a friendly one?
2. Who have you once held in high esteem only to discover that the real them was far different from what you thought?

Understanding:

3. God promises a better future. Read Micah 4:1-2 and compare it to Isa 2:2-3. What did each prophet think of God's purpose? Are there any differences? Why do you think so?
4. Both in 700 BC and now, people have the stubborn obstacle of pride. In verses 13-16 there are word pictures of pride in 700 BC. Look at those pictures and then explain how you might update them for our world of 2015.
5. Verse 19 says that people will try to hide from the terror and majesty of the Lord. What a frightening warning! Yet God gives us an escape. Read John 1:5-7. We can make a wise decision! What is it? Is it merely to believe the right facts about Jesus?
6. Read Hosea 2:18-19. How does Hosea describe God's peace? How is Hosea even clearer than Isaiah about how this peace is closely tied to what God is like? What are some of the qualities of what God is like described by Hosea?
7. Isaiah 2:9 has a terrifying request from the prophet towards proud people: "do not forgive them!". Isaiah has given up on his generation. But thank God that we have a remedy! Read Luke 24:46-48. In what location did the remedy start? How does it apply to us?
8. Today's passage warns against trusting in mere humans. Read Psalm 146:3-4 for more on this. When are you the most likely to fall into that trap of trusting people too much?
9. Ephesians 5:8 describes a wonderful transition that can happen in our battle with pride. Give an example of a way that God has rescued you from the darkness of pride in your own life.
10. James 4:6 also describes a remedy for pride. What is God's provision here? Why do we need to remind ourselves of it every day?

Application:

11. Verse 4 said "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;" People of all ages have taken these words to express their longings for freedom from war, when the nations seek to follow the "ways" of "the God of Jacob". In what way would you most long to see this change happen? Pray towards that end!
12. Pastor Dave mentioned the false belief in the John Lennon song "Imagine", that we would have peace if we just gave up childish belief in God. How could you kindly correct someone who has that mistaken belief?