



Links Players

Keeping Our Face Like Flint

Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. (Isaiah 50:7)

Tiger Woods' journey to success was marked by relentless hard work. Growing up in southern California, Woods adhered to a golfing routine that many would consider extreme. He took up his first club at the tender age of two and was already clinching tournament victories by six.

However, his transformation from child prodigy to golfing icon (some argue the greatest of all time) owes much to the rigorous training instilled by his father, Earl.

Earl's demanding approach to Tiger has been well-documented over the years. His stringent methods likely contributed significantly to Woods' formidable competitive edge.

Initially, Earl employed various tactics to challenge young Tiger mentally — from jingling change while he lined up putts to throwing objects in his field of vision and even shouting during his backswing.

I remember the first time I saw Tiger Woods. It was 1988, and I was walking onto the range to warm up before my practice round at the Junior World Optimist Championship in San Diego. He was a couple of years older than me, and I had never seen a kid my age hit a golf ball like that.

After each round, it was common for young competitors to gather in the evenings and have some fun. At that age, most of us would head to the hotel pool, swim, and order pizza. Not Tiger. He and his father, Earl, would stay at the golf course and continue practicing until dark. His dedication in regard to golf was far beyond anything I had seen in junior golfers our age. I knew there was something truly special about him.

I believe the key to Tiger's success is that he learned at a very young age to keep his face like flint in competition. The phrase "keeping your face like flint" originates from the Bible, specifically in the book of Isaiah. Here's the context and meaning of this phrase: "Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame."

This verse is part of a passage where the prophet Isaiah speaks on behalf of the servant of the Lord, who remains steadfast and resolute despite facing opposition and hardship.

Proverbs 4:25 says something similar to Isaiah about keeping focused on what's in front of you, "Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you."

Tiger learned how to focus and zone in. He knew how to fix his gaze on the prize. His training prepared him to become a winner. It takes focus, perseverance, determination, and belief to win any battle. Tiger learned how to win battles on the course.

How can we, as Christians, glean from training like he endured to become victorious in the battles of life that we face?

The key to success is keeping our eyes on Jesus Christ and not allowing distractions to move us. On the highway of life, there will be many exits to the right and left that may pull us out of our lanes, but when we keep focused on our target, Jesus, He will give us victory. We must tune out the distractions and noise on all sides and keep our faces like flint.

So, let's do that-let us "keep our face like flint" and stay committed to following God's will, remaining unshaken by obstacles, and relying on the Lord's divine strength to endure difficulties. Just as Isaiah encouraged us to "keep our face like flint," let us remain resolute in our faith journey, unwavering in our commitment to God's path, and steadfast in trusting His guidance to overcome all challenges.

Prayer: "Lord, help us to keep our faces like flint focused on you"

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