



Links Players

How to Hit 375-Yard Drives

Your help makes me great. (2 Samuel 22:36)

One of my favorite golf memories is playing Royal Aberdeen in Scotland. I remember the first tee, which is uncomfortably close to the club's dining room window, the first hole down the hill toward the sea, and the walk up the 18th fairway. But mostly, I remember the wind.

Like the Old Course at St. Andrews, Royal Aberdeen is routed out and back along the North Sea. I've played a lot of links golf in Scotland, and the wind is a given, but on this day, it was ferocious.

The out holes, starting with the 2nd, were directly into the teeth of the wind. I typically hit a five-iron 195 yards. From the center of the 2nd fairway, I busted a five-iron, watched it climb above the horizon, pause in mid-air, and fall straight to the ground . . . 150 yards in front of me. We battled the same invisible opponent for the next two hours.

On the incoming nine, though, that same unabating gale blew at our backs. No longer opposed by this unseen force, I settled into a good tempo with my driver. I knew all I had to do was make good contact, and the wind would carry my Titleist willingly down the fairway.

On one 375-yard par 4, I drove the ball pin high left of the green, and on another 390-yard par 4, my tee shot finished just short of the green. I had never hit a golf ball so far so effortlessly.

When we talk about the grace of God, we usually think of God's forgiveness. However, the grace of God is also God's supernatural assistance that enables us to do what we could not do in our own strength.

When the Lord told the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you you . . .," He was not speaking of His forgiveness but His power. King David spoke of the same supernatural assistance when reflecting on his victories in battle, declaring, "By my God, I can leap over a wall," "You enlarge my steps under me," and "Your help makes me great." (2 Samuel 22: 30, 36, 37).

The enabling grace of God is like that wind on the incoming nine at Royal Aberdeen. It can enhance our efforts and lift us to places we could never reach on our own. Not everyone experiences it, though, and we do not experience it as much as we could or should.

James wrote that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). Humility is the key to experiencing God's empowering grace because humility places us in a position of Truth relative to God.

Humility acknowledges not just our need for God's forgiveness but our need for His assistance. Humility drives us to our knees, seeking His divine assistance to do more than we can in our own strength. Humility asks, seeks, and knocks. (Matthew 7:7-8).

Pride does not see the need to ask, or it may seek God's forgiveness but not His assistance. Either way, pride deprives us of the fullness of God's grace and sets Him in opposition to our efforts.

For the proud is reserved the 150-yard five-iron. Swing as hard as you like, hit it on the sweet spot, and it still isn't going anywhere. Pride predestines us to play into a relentless wall of wind.

It is better to hit 375-yard drives.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for reminding me of my limitations so I will remember to seek your grace.

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