

STREET RODDERS AND THE STREETS OF GOLD



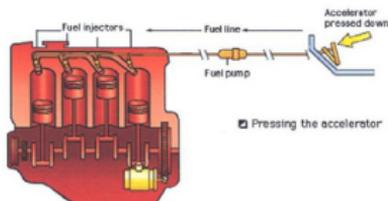
ARE YOU A FUNCTIONING DISTRIBUTOR?



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(Tyndale)

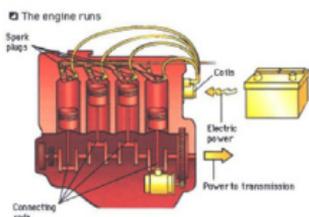
Would you entertain the notion that the Christian life and a car engine's **distributor** have something in common? Of course, this is mainly for old geezers who can remember the days prior to **electronic ignition systems**. As an engineer, it interests me that the distributor distributes the electrical current to the engine to bring the spark together with the fuel at exactly the right time to cause the explosion in the cylinder.

Let's take a closer look. The **battery** and **alternator** provide the electrical power to the **distributor**. Each **cylinder**—with its fuel and oxygen—in turn gets its spark so that there is a regular and predictable sequence of firing. This causes the revolutions of the engine which are then fed into the **trans-**



mission and on to the **drive train** which supplies the power to the wheels. As long as everything is in proper working order, there is a synchronous operation of the engine and drive train. However, a relatively small dysfunction disrupts the system, maybe stopping the car altogether.

My purpose is to review some of the ways that an automotive distributor might malfunction and compare that to the spiritual life. In this comparison, we will assume an uninterrupted



flow of the proper power from the **battery/alternator** and a consistent supply of fuel and oxygen to support combustion; the only variable we will be addressing is the distribution of available

electrical power to its proper destination in full force at the proper time.

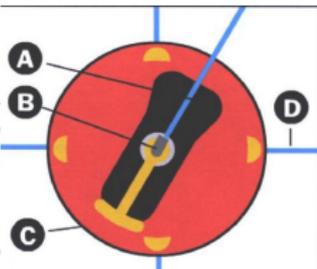
Of course, this is the reason this component in the ignition system is called a **distributor**.

If the **condenser** is dead in a distributor, it will not permit the available power to be distributed. In like manner, if we are dead to God and have never had a new birth, His power, that is infinitely available, can not flow into and through us and make us into the person that God created us to be.



Foreign material, such as water or buildup of carbon, can contaminate and cause a distributor to be ineffective or completely disrupt its functioning. Such material must be cleaned out just as contaminants must be cleansed from our lives in the form of confession and repentance such that the Blood of the Lord Jesus will cleanse us from sin and unrighteousness.

The distributor contains a **set of points**, or **contacts**, through which the electrical power flows. The distributor shaft turns with the engine so that the points open and close to provide sequential power to the cylinders in turn. The



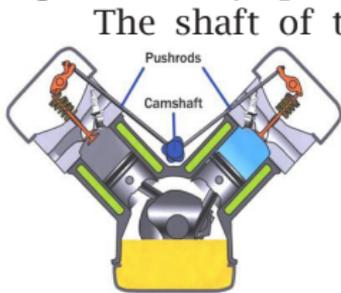
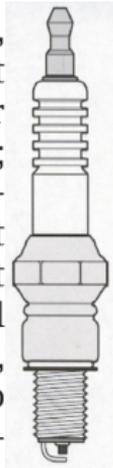
The power enters the distributor through a wire from the **coil** and is discharged from the distributor through wires to the **spark plugs** which are energized in the proper firing order. If these wires are connected to the wrong plug, the distributor may be functioning properly but the engine runs roughly, if at all.



A few years ago, my wife and I took our '69 Ford LTD on an anniversary trip. It

began to run roughly upon our arrival in the city, and the next morning the parking attendant attempted to crank it, to no avail. After attending church by taking a taxi, I tried to start it and still had no success. I opened the distributor to find that the points had slipped so that the contacts were not opening as the engine turned; consequently, the engine could not fire. I adjusted the gap of the points, and it ran perfectly. In similar manner, if our lives are not adjusted to receive the flow of the Holy Spirit, we are not going to get going for Him.

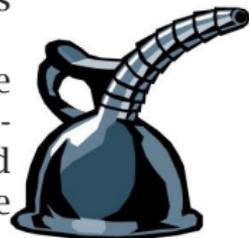
For the distributor to work properly, all of the **contacts** must be clean and bright or the flow of electrical current to one or more of the **spark plugs** will be limited; though the engine may run, it will not experience full power with some cylinders not firing. If the contacts are burned and not worn appreciably, they can be cleaned and returned to normal use. In similar fashion, a believer must be free of sin if he is to maintain contact with the powerful working of the Holy Spirit.



The shaft of the **distributor** may be bent and not have the proper contact with the **camshaft** or the **bearings** may be worn out so that the friction causes malfunction. Just so, the believer may be lacking intimate contact with our Lord and

may be grinding on other believers due to lack of proper bearing.

Also, the **lubrication** of the buffer on the points within the distributor will prevent its wear and allow the points to open and close



properly. The lubrication of the Oil of the Holy Spirit will prevent our wearing on each other in the Body of Christ.

The distributor may function perfectly but may have a **faulty connection** to the engine through the wires to the plugs which subverts its function. Or, the wire may be good, but the spark plug is dead and doesn't spark! Just so, the believer may function in his relationship with the Lord, but not be vitally connected to the church, the Body of Christ. Just as the cylinder will not fire if the wire is missing or defective, a believer that is missing from the Body of Christ will not be giving the input to the Body that is needed for the full functioning of the local assembly of believers.



It is possible for all components of the distributor to be functioning but still have a negative effect on the running of the engine. The power can be there and have all connections properly in place and yet have a defective or cracked **distributor cap**. Such a covering can short circuit the distributor; it can not be repaired so it must be replaced.

Comparing this to the Christian life, what needs to be replaced? In our relationship with our Lord, we can have the new birth experience and serve Him only to find that there is a barrier to the power of the Holy Spirit, which the Bible calls flesh. We might accomplish some service living from this resource, but most of it will be in vain. Flesh can not be improved or have its faults covered over; it must be functionally replaced by

denying ourselves and taking up the Cross. We must reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive unto God (Luke 9:23; Romans 6:11). Once the Holy Spirit illumines believers to their spiritual union with Christ, they become effective distributors of His Life

The new distributor cap can be in place and working perfectly, but it is necessary to be connected at all times to the power source and that all contacts be kept clean and in good condition. In our relationship with our Lord, we need to daily *“walk in the power of the Spirit of God”* (Galatians 5:16) and *“take up the Cross daily”* (Luke 9:23).

Is it possible that you have all the makings of a good distributor but have never been plugged into the power of God by spiritual rebirth? *“Jesus answered and said unto him, truly, truly, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3). *“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Romans 6:23). Will you receive Him by faith today? *“For as many as received Him gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name”* (John 1:12).

If you have never accepted Christ as your personal Savior, your first need is to let God create you anew by giving you spiritual rebirth. You can be born again if you can honestly pray like this:

“Heavenly Father, I have seen that I am a sinner, still in the life of Adam, and that I have committed sins. I believe You sent Your only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die in my place for my sins. I also believe He rose again and now lives, and right now I receive Him into my spirit as my Savior. I surrender all that I am, all that I have, and all I shall be to You. I turn from my sins and my self-

ish ways to live my new life in Christ. Thank you for saving me. Amen.”

Or, it may be that you have received Him but are yet a poor distributor. If so, are you willing to lose your life in order to save it (Matthew 16:24,25)?

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