

Our Lord, our gratitude and our money

What are gratitude offerings and love offerings?

Gratitude offerings (commonly called “tithes” or “church contributions”) and love offerings (commonly referred to as the “collection” during the worship service) is money that I give as part of my complete worship of the Lord.

Why do we give gratitude offerings and love offerings?

Gratitude is the core biblical motivation for the giving of gratitude offerings and love offerings:

- *gratitude* to the Lord for His grace
 - because we, lost sinners, have received heavenly riches (salvation) through Jesus Christ (2 Cor.8:9).
 - because everything we are and have belongs to the Lord and He gives us His gifts to use (Ps.24:1; Ecc.5:17-18).
- gratitude offerings are *offerings of gratitude to serve the Lord* (2 Kor.9:13a). *This is how the Bible talks about monetary contributions (2 Kor.9:5b).*

What are gratitude offerings and love offerings used for?

Gratitude offerings are used in service of the kingdom of the Lord, viz:

- *for the advancement of the preaching of the Gospel and the making visible of his redemptive grace to the world*
 - by enabling ministers to preach the Gospel full-time for the edification of our congregation (Luke 10:7; 1 Timothy 5:18; 1 Corinthians 9:3-18)
 - by financing the expenses of the congregation
 - by enabling missionaries throughout the world to spread the Good News (2 Cor.8:1-7)
- *for making visible the Lord's loving rule to churches/(faith) communities outside Die Bult*
 - by supporting institutions in the community or fellow believers outside of my faith family (2 Thessalonians 3:13; Galatians. 6:10; Acts 20:35).

Love offerings are employed in the Christian love service, viz.:

- *Under the guidance of the deacons, we take care of each other*
 - so that no one becomes alienated from us because of poverty, loneliness, old age, illness, or for other reasons.
- *Under the guidance of the deacons, we care for others*
 - so that other people in need can also experience the love of Christ.

With what attitude should I give?

In both the Old and New Testaments, the attitude with which people do things is important.

In 2 Corinthians 9, the Lord teaches that He wants sacrifices out of gratitude, voluntary sacrifices and not sacrifices that are forced. God loves the cheerful giver (2 Cor.9:7, Ex.35:5).

Another important concept in the Bible is the FIRSTFRUITS GIFT. It was the custom in the time of the Old Testament to bring the first of the harvest to the temple of the Lord (Ex.13:11,12, Prov.3:9). In fact, in the first fruit, the entire crop was represented. So, whoever brings the first and best to the Lord says that he realizes that everything belongs to the Lord.

How much should I give?

In the Old Testament, the giving of a tithe was a clear precept, e.g. Lev.27:30-32 and Gen.14:17-20.

In the New Testament, much less is made of giving a tithe. Nowhere is the practice pertinently upheld or condemned as a command from the Lord. There are indications that the Lord does not reject it as He dismisses some of the other Old Testament laws.

In the command to give ourselves as living sacrifices for the Lord (Rom.12:1) we find the principle that not only a part of us (including our income) belongs to the Lord, but that we belong completely to the Lord. We should therefore use ourselves and all our possessions and income as an offering to the Lord.

Against this background, the church council's guideline for gratitude offerings is:

- 5% of net income per month.
- Students: estimated GKSA estimates (R140 per month) + R250 per month = R390 per month

GKPB Church Council account for gratitude offerings: Gereformeerde Kerk Potchefstroom Die Bult ABSA 670-264-661 (Cheque Account) Reference: Surname, initials, gratitude offering.	GKPB Deacons account for love offerings: Diakonie Gereformeerde Kerk Potchefstroom Die Bult ABSA 670 280 004 (Cheque account)
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