**An Opportunity to Serve the Lord**

Text: Romans 8:29-30

Idea: What God has planned for every believer

I. Introduction:

 In Paul’s letter to the church in Rome, he explains that God has predestined every believer to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. And those He has predestined, He has called, justified, and will glorify. So what has God called us to do with our lives?

II. God has called every believer

 A. To fulfill the **Great Commission**. (Matthew 28:19-20)

 B. To be a minister of **Reconciliation**. (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

 C. To serve Him through **good works**. (Ephesians 2:10)

III. An opportunity to serve the Lord through Operation Christmas Child:

 A. Video

 B. History of OCC: Since 1993, OCC, the world’s largest Christmas project of its kind,

 has collected and delivered more than 188 million shoebox gifts to children in more

 than 170 countries and 50 territories. In 2021, OCC hopes to collect enough shoebox

 gifts to reach another 9.7 million children.

 C. Main purpose of OCC: To give millions of children around the world a shoebox gift

 filled with toys and other items, along with a booklet called The Greatest Gift, which

 explains how they can receive the greatest gift anyone could ever receive—the gift of

 salvation—by trusting, believing in, and receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

D. Children who receive shoeboxes are also given an opportunity to participate in a

 12-lesson, Bible-based, follow-up discipleship program, “The Greatest Journey,”

 which helps them come to know Jesus as Savior, grow in faith, and share the Gospel.

 E. Another amazing result of the Operation Christmas Child outreach is that entire

 families are coming to the Lord and 1,000 new churches a year are being planted.

IV. How you can get involved:

1. Buy and donate items to go in the shoeboxes the church is packing.
2. Help pack shoeboxes on church packing days.
3. Take shoeboxes home to pack with your family.
4. Make donations to cover the $9 per box cost of collecting, processing, shipping, training local churches, and producing The Greatest Gift Gospel booklets.
5. Pray for the children who will receive the boxes and their families to come to Christ.

V. Our goal for 2021:

 A. Pack 300 shoeboxes

 B. Raise $2700 ($9 per box) to send to OCC with the boxes

VI. One final thought: When one hundred million prayers are lifted to heaven for one hundred

 million boxes that will be given to one hundred million souls, might Jesus lean up on the

 edge of His throne and say, *I have used these gifts given in My name to open the children's*

 *hearts, and My offer remains to all who come seeking, for I will answer*.