**Unconquerable Love**

 ***31****What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?****32****He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?****33****Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.****34****Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.****35****Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?****36****As it is written,*

*“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
    we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

***37****No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.****38****For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,****39****nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:31-39, ESV)*

 The Armenian Genocide failed, because it could not conquer Christ’s love and drive it out of us.

 Greetings to you dearly beloved on this important occasion, as we commemorate the 107th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. Today’s message, however, is not simply to commemorate the event. It is not simply to relive the events as we sing “Der Voghormia” (“Lord Have Mercy in Armenian”). Nor is it for simple awareness that we retell how our grandmothers and grandfathers endured, how they hid in caves in the desert. We’re not talking about the Genocide just so we remember that the remnants were protected by European and American missionaries, or the fact that they wandered those deserts, saw the death of their loved ones, and still continued to walk – to walk toward and through the many lands and places in the face of robbery, hunger, torture, kidnappings. In all of that, our grandfathers and grandmothers and their parents walked, wandered and still for a reason, which is our subject for today, did not succumb, but surrendered themselves into God’s hands. They knew there was a reason for all they went through, and with their faces set towards Heaven, towards the East from which the Savior would come again as the Sun of Salvation, our hero-grandfathers remained united with the love of the True God.

 It is difficult to describe the emotions you go through when you know that all your belongings are gone, lost forever. It may be that some of you or your fathers or grandfathers reached these shores with great difficulties. Whether through war, poverty, dangers, or unstable political situations, you find yourselves here because of them. One thing is clear, however: that God’s love, in Jesus Christ will not ever cease, even if we were massacred. Nothing can stop the love that comes from God through Jesus Christ. In other words, once Jesus is ours, mine, yours, no one can take Him from within us – it is only we that can put Him aside – but no one else.

 Today as we commemorate faith-hero forefathers, be they those that had no recourse but to take up arms against the attackers, or those who marched in the deserts and trusted only God, we need to ask ourselves: **How much do we appreciate and also reproduce that same faith and trust in the Lord that they had towards Him within us?** How much do we honestly believe that no matter what happens, no matter the difficulty, that God loves us still in every circumstance and gives us what we need?

 Yes, He did not intervene then in the way that you or I would have wanted. Through His missionary servants, however, and His brave young men and elderly grandparents, and through His Almighty power, He continued to both respect man’s evil and twisted free will, all the while intervening enough to allow a remnant to remain in this world, to be a light to darkened and spiritually bankrupted humanity.

 Believe or think whatever you want – but the Scriptures, if they are your Book and your trustworthy voice of God today, it is they that say that the attempted and failed genocide upon the Armenian nation is a proof that the love of God in Christ still lived and lives within us. They prayed and trusted in those days – today they still pray there and trust Him in the face of danger.

 Here, however, in these relatively peaceful shores of America, just how much to we reflect that love for Jesus, that Presence of Jesus in our lives? How much do we appreciate the sacrifices of our forefathers for the love of Jesus? And, so we are clear, that appreciation does not mean to try to “be good” in your own power – absolutely not. Rather, if we want to genuinely appreciate the lives and efforts of our forefathers during the genocide, then we are called to have the same love, faith, and trust in Christ even in the face of death.

 Nothing can stop the love that comes from God in Jesus. May the Lord wake us up to what our forefathers did. May we, also have that same love for Jesus that they showed, no matter the situation or danger they faced.

 Their memory is always blessed; but what is important is that is becomes an example for us. May the Lord Bless you all. Amen.