John 19:39
39 Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight.
Crushed by persecution...

Gave off a fragrant aroma of faithfulness to God.

LIFE

Persecution.

Circumstances.
Rev. 2:8

And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:
9 ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)…

In our relative comfort let us not grow complacent.

We don’t take the Bible serious.

Truth becomes difficult to define and even more difficult to stand up for.

The culture is winning.
The idea that all roads lead to God is becoming prevalent.

The weight of persecution press the church together, binding believers closer and closer to one another and to Christ!

Hypocrites don’t stick around to be persecuted.

False Christians don’t want pain.

False Christians feel they didn’t sign up for this.

True Christians know exactly what it means to follow Jesus.
I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)...
1 John 3:9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

Barbara Jean – “I’m so glad we can still be friends, I was so afraid that the baby would change the way you feel about me.”

Reba (sarcastically) “No, I still feel the same way about you as I always have.”

Barbara Jean – “I have to agree with Brock here. Two wrongs don’t make a right in the eyes of our Lord.”

Reba – “At your church do you sit with the rest of the congregation or is there a special pew for adulterers?”

Barbara Jean “Well, actually I sit with the choir.”

We are different
We read and study His Word so we can know what He expects from us.
We help those in need
We are going to be hated by the world
We test what we hear
We don’t habitually practice sin
We don’t live these double lives
We persevere to the end
2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer.

Psalm 4:8
8 I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 29:11
11 The LORD will give strength to His people; The LORD will bless His people with peace.

2:10...Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days.
Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

11 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.’

The first death is physical.
The second death is spiritual and eternal.

“For eighty-six years I have served Christ and He has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King, who saved me?”

A stepping stone to a greater faith in Jesus.
WARNING: rant! My heart is breaking over all of the recent suicides in the news. How can we have an open conversation with the nation about the fact that suicide DOES NOT END LIFE. Life is eternal and we have to choose heaven or hell. If these people are Christians they are rejoicing but if they are not then the pain they are feeling now is a billion times more than what they were feeling when they took their lives.