



**It** was a beautiful Fall day at the beach. The waves were lapping gently against the shore, the sun's rays were warm on my body and the breeze cool. Facing the ocean, I rocked back and forth. On my shoulder and into my neck, nestled a little head, with curly red hair matted to a face soaked and stained with tears. Our granddaughter was exhausted and spent. It had been a particularly rough day at the beach for a little toddler. She wasn't feeling her best and her toddler emotions had taken their toll. As she was having a "moment" at the house, I started to escape for a walk on the beach but something made me turn around, pick her up, and take her with me.

**My** mother told me that I myself was a "trying" baby who cried a lot and refused to sleep. A neighbor would come to the house and watch me so my mother could escape to walk up and down the street. She needed a break. Walking soothed her and to this day, I find that when I am anxious, my first instinct is to walk. So with the little head on my shoulder, I walked. My back ached, my knees protested and my arms quivered from exhaustion, but I walked.

**As** I carried her little body in my arms using all the strength I could muster, I felt the fight and tension leave her body as she drifted off to sleep. I whispered in her ear how much she was loved and then I stopped and turned to the ocean. Standing there, I thought of the things I wrestle with. I thought of the emotional burdens that I carry, and the tension I hold onto. I thought about the battles of life I struggle with each day and time spent fretting and worrying. I thought about my rebellious nature; determined and fighting to have my way over God's will. All of it leaves me physically and mentally exhausted. Then I thought of the **ONE** who will carry it *all* for us. During his earthly ministry, **Jesus** walked. He walked from town to town, giving healing to the sick, the lame, and the blind. He comforted the brokenhearted and gave peace to the distressed.

**With** my feet in the warm sand and my eyes gazing far into the ocean, I heard God speaking to me. He reminded me that when I feel overwhelmed with the burdens, struggles, and trials of life, and when my emotions have wearied me and taken their toll, all I need to do is rest my head on his shoulder. I need to quit wrestling. I need to surrender, let go, quit fighting, and lean into him. He who is all-powerful and sovereign over creation is tender with His children as he gathers them near. He lovingly cares and gently guides. He holds us close to his heart; close to himself. On his shoulder and in his strong arms, we find protection, security, and rest. In the **Good Shepherd**, we find peace as we dwell in his everlasting love.

***He tends his flock like a shepherd:***




***He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart;  
he gently leads those that have young.***

***Isaiah 40:11***

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