

Diary of a Father

After Tom Watson suffered a  stroke seven years ago, he began to question what memories he would leave his three sons. He didn't want Father's Day to become for them what it had been for him: just another day without a real dad. He wondered if they even knew his history of being physically and emotionally abused while being shuffled through 13 foster homes by age 5. So Watson resigned to quietly detail his story in a journal and some day give it to his sons.

Little did he know his riveting secret diary would hold lessons not only for his sons, but also for fathers and sons everywhere since the journal became a published book called *Man Shoes*.

"If I died tomorrow, I know I've left a testimony and a witness to my boys about life," he says. "I know that my sons have my life stories and my journey; they know they are loved."

Watson has a master's degree and started two successful businesses, but life has been an uphill battle. Due to his tumultuous upbringing, he says, he was a "little monster." He'd bite, kick and steal, eating food straight out of packages at grocery stores.

Watson seemingly had little hope until

he arrived at his 13th foster home, where he stayed with a retired pastor and a schoolteacher. Though nearing retirement, the couple adopted him and introduced him to his heavenly Father. He says they looked past his reckless actions and loved him into obedience. He says they also taught him a lifelong principle: "Choice plus my action equals my life."

Through *Man Shoes*, Watson hopes his sons will do more than aim to fill his shoes; he wants them to understand one of life's major lessons: "Life will throw things at you, good and bad. But Jesus Christ is there for you every day."