

The Sacred Edict of the Kangxi Emperor, 1670

THE SIXTEEN MAXIMS (SHENGYU)

1. Strengthen filial piety and brotherly affection to emphasize human relations.
2. Strengthen clan relations to illustrate harmony.
3. Pacify relations between local groups to put an end to quarrels and litigation.
4. Stress agriculture and sericulture so that there may be sufficient food and clothing.
5. Prize frugality so as to make careful use of wealth.
6. Promote education to improve the habits of scholars.
7. Extirpate heresy to exalt orthodoxy.
8. Speak of the law to give warning to the stupid and stubborn.
9. Clarify rites and manners to improve customs.
10. Let each work at his own occupation so that the people's minds will be settled.
11. Instruct young people to prevent them from doing wrong.
12. Prevent false accusations to shield the law-abiding.
13. Prohibit sheltering of runaways to avoid being implicated in their crime.
14. Pay taxes to avoid being pressed for payment.
15. Unite the baojia system to eliminate theft and armed robbery.
16. Resolve hatred and quarrels to respect life.