1. To learn

1. The Master said, "To learn and to put it into practice at the right moment; isn't it wonderful! To have friends who come visit you from afar; isn't it delightful! People don't understand you and you don't mind; you sure are a noble man!"

2. Master You said, "He who serves his parents with respect and treats his brothers with affection would rarely usurp his superiors. He who would not usurp his superiors, but would nevertheless cause disruption: there hasn't been one. A noble man will direct his efforts to what is fundamental. When the foundation is established, then the Way will appear. Respect for parents and affection for brothers are the root of ethical integrity."

3. The Master said, "Soothing words and pleasant face; there can hardly be any ethical integrity there."

4. Master Zeng said, "Every day, I scrutinise myself about three things — in undertaking other people's business, whether I was loyal; in my dealings with friends, whether I was trustworthy; what I have been taught, whether I put it into practice."

5. The Master said, "The way to govern a country of thousand chariots is this. Respectfully handle the matters with trustworthiness. Adopt a measured approach but love people. Mobilise the people at the right moment."

6. The Master said, "When you are at home, serve your parents. When you go out, be affectionate to others. Be earnest and trustworthy. Comprehensively love all living beings but closeness should be based on ethical integrity. Conduct should come first. Then, study when you have energy to spare."

7. Zi Xia said, "If you know better than knowing, overcome appearances, serve your parents with all your might, serve your boss with all that you have, abide by your words when socialising with friends, who can say that you haven't learned? I will certainly say that you have learned."

8. The Master said, "A noble man who lacks gravitas does not inspire awe. Learning will remove narrow-mindedness. The most important thing is to be loyal and trustworthy. Do not befriend those who are not as good as you. If you discover a fault, do not hesitate to mend it."

9. Master Zeng said, "When funerals are conducted sincerely and ancestors are commemorated for a long time, people's virtue will become ample again."

10. Zi Qin asked Zi Gong, "When the Master arrives at a country, he is always consulted about government affairs. Does he seek it or is it given to him?" Zi Gong said, "The Master obtains it through his warmth, honesty, modesty, moderation and humility. What he seeks is different from what people seek."

11. The Master said, "When your father is around, you need to observe his intentions. When he is no longer around, you need to observe his deeds. If you do not divert from your father's way for three years, you can be regarded as serving your parents well."

12. Master You said, "Among the uses of Li, bringing people together is the most important. Previous kings' way of governing elevated Li to the realm of beauty. Hence, Li became the criterion of the big and the small. There are things that should not be done. To think that uniting is merely uniting and to fail to apply a measured approach to it; that should not be done."

13. Master You said, "If your trust is close to righteousness, you may carry out your promises. If your politeness is close to Li, you can avoid humiliation. If you do not, as a result, lose your popularity, you can be a leader.

14. The Master said, "A noble man will eat but not seek to bloat out. He will have a dwelling but not seek comfort. He will be forthcoming in his conduct but cautious with his words. He will proceed along the Way and be forthright. Such a man can be regarded as fond of learning."

15. Zi Gong said, "In poverty, yet not be abject; in affluence, yet not be arrogant. How's that?" The Master said, "Possible. But still, it is not as good as being poor yet in delight; being rich yet fond of Li." Zi Gong said, "The Odes have it, 'Like a gem! Now quarried, now filed, now sculpted and now polished!' Is that what you mean?" The Master said, "Ci, Now we can talk poetry together! I tell you one thing and you understand the next."

16. The Master said, "Do not worry if others do not understand you; seek instead to understand others."