Mister Chu Po-lu's "Maxims for the Well-Governed Household"

Arise at the break of day; have the front porch swept off and everything clean and in its place. Rest from the day's work at dusk; have all doors locked and check them personally.

Remember that even a bowl of congee or rice is not easy to come by and constantly think of the material difficulty involved in the making of even a bit of silk thread.

You ought to repair the roof before it rains and not wait to dig a well until thirst approaches.

Be frugal in your personal expenditures, but do not be miserly in entertaining guests. Utensils should be simple but clean: earthenware surpasses gold or jade. Be frugal but wholesome in your food and drink: the vegetables from your own garden are better than any rare delicacies. Do not maintain an elaborate establishment and do not scheme for fertile fields.

The "three young females" and "six old women" (i.e. various types of nuns, procuresses, etc.) are truly the intermediaries of lust and thievery. Good-looking maidservants and stylish concubines do not make for good fortune in the women's quarters. Male servants ought not to be too refined or sophisticated; wives and concubines must shun overly attractive adornment.
Though the ancestors are distant, you must be sincere in sacrificing to them. Though sons and grandsons are not bright, you must have them study the Classics.

Be simple and plain in your own personal life but resort to the best possible way to bring up and teach children. Do not covet unearned profits. Do not drink to excess. When trading with peddlers, do not take advantage of them.

When you see poor and unfortunate relatives or neighbors, you must show sympathy for and assist them. If your fortune is established with stinginess, it is reasonable to expect that you will not long enjoy it. If you go against the moral principles, you will soon be destroyed. Brothers, uncles and nephews should divide their surplus with the less fortunate among them. [Among family members], old or young, men or women, there should be respect for the rules of behavior and gravity of speech.

What man of spirit will listen to the words of his woman to the detriment of his own flesh and blood? If you put great weight on wealth and yet are stingy toward your parents, you are not the son of your father.

When marrying off a daughter, choose a good son-in-law, and do not aim at expensive gifts. When you seek a wife for your son, look for a good girl and do not merely scheme for a fat dowry.
To put on a flattering countenance when among the rich and well-born is most reprehensible. To behave arrogantly toward the poor is mean beyond all reckoning.

Avoid litigation, for it can only end in trouble. When among people avoid talking too much, for garrulousness must result in errors. Do not presume upon your power to insult and annoy widows and orphans. Do not be gluttonous in your appetites and wanton in the slaughter of animals. If you are obstinately sure that you are always right, you will have many mistakes to repent for. If you are lazy and self indulgent, your household will in the end waste away.

If you keep bad company when young, you will in the long run suffer for it. But if you keep on friendly terms with the honest and reliable, then you will have them to lean on in time of crisis.

If you unthinkingly listen to whatever is said, how will you be able to identify slander? You ought to patiently think things over three times. If you are contentious, how will you know when you are not right? You must calm yourself and then reconsider a situation.

Do not dwell upon the favors you have conferred on others, but do not forget favors received. In all dealings with people, leave them room to retreat honorably. When you have gained what you intended, do not press for more.
When others have good fortune, do not be jealous; when others are in trouble, do not rejoice. To do good so that others may see it is not true goodness. To do evil and fear that others will know of it is a great evil. If, when you see a pretty woman you lust after her, your own wives and daughters will suffer retribution. If you hold grudges and use underhanded methods to gain revenge, calamity will surely be visited upon your sons and grandsons.

If your family is smoothly regulated, then even if there is not enough food for all to eat regularly, you will still always have a surplus of happiness. If you pay your taxes early, then even if there is nothing left in your pockets, you can still attain full happiness. In your studies, your ambition should be to emulate the sage and the virtuous and not merely to win a degree. An official's heart should be dedicated to his country; how dare he scheme for his personal advantage?

Maintain your place and be content with your fate. Be in accord with the times and listen to the commands of Heaven.

If a man can do all these things, he will not be far from the ideal.