own. His qualitative study of several churches in Detroit and Austin, although rooted in a convenience sample, does include a broad array of political activity levels that offers some favorable comment on the model. His analyses of these data are clearly the highlight of the book. Still, a design that incorporated competing hypotheses more explicitly would have been most welcome. For instance, an essential question is whether church/clergy politicking is the result of intentional identity formation or a by-product of satisfying more primary needs. McDaniel mentions both alternatives but does not pit them against each other. The quantitative data presented here are less helpful for a variety of reasons; either they are unrepresentative or lacking questions relevant to test the model.

McDaniel has done quite a bit here with data that are generally ill suited to test such a sophisticated model of the political involvement of churches. Thus, this book encourages us to pursue this line of work, as it bolsters the model and findings of previous studies of quite different populations in different eras. The conclusion, in particular, is a smart delineation of important questions yet to be addressed, while it might have placed more emphasis on the interconnections of the congregation with a more nuanced enumeration of environmental forces. A final note is that the study included some description of the content of political activity, suggesting that the particulars of issue areas entail different grounds for negotiations among members of the congregation. This is a particularly interesting observation that deserves more sustained treatment.

***Secret Faith in the Public Square: An Argument for the Concealment Of Christian Identity*. By Jonathan Malesic. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009. 248 pp. $27.99 paper**

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Jonathan Malesic seeks to advance the existence of a distinctively Christian identity, with equal emphases on both "distinctive" and "Christian." Individuals in the United States often tout their religiosity

with an eye to their own commercial or political advantage. Malesic is concerned not with the possible damage this tendency may wreak on the public life of the nation, but rather with the damage that it does to Christianity itself. Explicitly addressing theologians and other committed Christians in what he views as an internal conversation, he argues that although Christian identity should definitely inform individuals' lives in the world, they should not publicly broadcast that identity when they act upon it. Only the concealment of identity allows the agent to perform works of neighbor love in a way that both protects their origin in genuine faith and also renders reciprocation impossible.

Malesic begins with an examination of three varied historical approaches to "the discipline of the secret." Although Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem enjoyed the public legitimacy of Christianity in the fourth century, he emphasized the withholding of intellectual and experiential knowledge from baptismal candidates, instilling in them a responsibility for care of the sacraments, and the creed with which he was about to entrust them. By emphasizing the mystery of faith, he both created a group bond of anticipation among candidates who would later protect the faith and also forestalled opportunists.

Søren Kierkegaard, by contrast, sought to carve out a distinctive Christianity in nineteenth-century Europe where nominal Christianity was the norm. In his view, Christians needed to replace a rationalistic model of exchange with a hidden love of neighbor that impelled the Christian performance of good works in secret without the possibility of recompense. Rather than being beholden to his benefactor, ideally a beneficiary should have no other object of gratitude than God, while the benefactor is merely an active power representing God's love.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer suggested that although Christians should confess their identities in private with other Christians through liturgy and sacraments, they should conceal their identities in public. Like Kierkegaard, Bonhoeffer thought that concealing the distinctively Christian character of good works protected "the costliness of grace by forestalling the possibility of seeking a worldly reward for the works" (140) as well as by forestalling self-righteousness. Unlike Kierkegaard, however, Bonhoeffer emphasized that the merit of good works should be hidden from the doer himself. Christians "need to develop the habits of extraordinary behavior, but in doing so, they must not think that there is anything extraordinary about it" (125).

Contemporary American Christians, states Malesic, forget the importance of interiority to selfhood that functions as a forum for debate

among various facets of the self. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac is a quintessential example of interiority for both Kierkegaard and Bonhoeffer. Abraham's relationship to God is entirely interior, because his faith cannot be validated by any other person. "That is, if he is justified, he is justified only in secret" (179). For Malesic, Abraham represents the Christian who is willing to sacrifice family and nation for Christ, who must inwardly negotiate conflicting demands on his loyalty, and who may regain family and community but only *after* making a commitment to God and Christ. Similarly, Christians must negotiate with themselves and now each other in preserving the integrity and distinctiveness of Christian identity, acting in a sense as museum curators who care for and hang onto their collection in part by withholding many items from public display. Hanging onto the gospel need not be done directly, but may also involve indirect acts of neighbor love that help others to seek God.

Although evangelical Christians emphasize witnessing to the gospel, for Malesic, this has often been at the price of "readiness to adapt their views of the church and of Christian doctrine to the paradigms of power in American culture" (202), often coinciding with methods for worldly advancement. To avoid this corruption, distinctively Christian discipleship calls for the concealment of religious identity in public life. Malesic contrasts his account with that of Stanley Hauerwas, who privileges visible witness over the invisible aspects of Christianity. Although Hauerwas believes that this stance avoids an alliance of church with state, for Malesic it minimizes the centrality of the church's invisible aspect. One may infer that maintaining the integrity of this aspect is also better calculated to avoid an alliance of church with culture.

Malesic's account is a provocative one in the current context. Although some readers may wish that he had addressed in more detail the implications of his account for the modern social order, he does not ignore this entirely. For example, while Hauerwas believes that liberalism's emphasis on a placid social order valorizes tolerance over truth and impedes truthful witness, Malesic emphasizes that truth as God establishes it can require concealment or lying by worldly standards in order to protect this truth, as in lying to an SS officer as to the whereabouts of one's Jewish neighbors. Malesic's stated intention is to promote an internal and therefore presumably hidden conversation among Christians, and he does this admirably. This book has much to offer to those interested the nature of identity and selfhood as well as to theologians and historians of Christian thought.