INTRO

I. THE WARNING EXPRESSED.

    A. The meaning of the olive tree.
It refers to the chosen people of God, who are the spiritual, true people of God. It is made of up of believers beginning with Abraham. Not just Jewish believers for Gentiles are grafted in by faith.

    B. The language of judgment.
        1) Fear, for God will not spare you either if you do not continue in faith (Romans 11:20-21)
        2) Behold the kindness and severity of God. God’s severity to those who fell (in unbelief); and His kindness to you only if you continue in His kindness otherwise you also will be cut off (Romans 11:22).
        3) The possibility of being cut off (Romans 11:22). "IF you do not continue in His kindness" i.e. the kindness of God in the gospel which we are to continue in by faith.

II. THE WARNING EVALUATED.

    Is Paul saying that you can really be in the tree, the believing people of God, and then cut off? Can someone have saving faith and then lose it? Or, be saved and fall from grace and be lost?
    Paul can’t be saying that. Why do I say this?

    A. The use of the tree analogy.

         Analogies do not walk on all fours.

Cf. 1John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us.

    B. Compare Scripture with Scripture.

        Compare with Rom. 8:30; 38-39; 9:23; 11: 5 - our salvation is secure.

Also see John 6:39;
John 10:28-29;
1 Jn. 5:12;
1 Pet. 1:4-5.

III. THE WARNING EXPLAINED.

    A. The warnings teach the importance of perseverance.
        Perseverance in faith is a necessary mark of the elect of God. Matt. 24:13 "But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved."

        We persevere in faith because the Spirit perseveres with us. Phil. 1:6 “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”

    B. The "ifs" of Scriptural warnings are beneficial for believers.
        Other similar warnings: 1 Cor. 10:1-12; 15:2; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 5:2, Heb. 3:14; etc.

        Appropriate for believers who are living on the edge.

        Appropriate for Christians walking with the Lord.

    C. But what about those who do fall away?
If a believer does in fact stop believing and falls away, then the proper biblical assessment of that person is that in truth they were never actually a true believer to begin with. Only fake Christians, pretenders, are cut off. IF YOU LOSE IT, YOU NEVER HAD IT.

IV. IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS

    A. SELF- EXAMINATION FOR SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION

    B. SALVATION IS FOREVER, OR NEVER (Gerstner).

    C. TRUE FAITH IS A PERSEVERING FAITH.

    D. SECURITY IS A NECESSITY.

MAY GOD BY THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIFE CONVINCE OUR HEARTS OF THIS GREAT TRUTH THAT TRUE BRANCHES CAN NEVER BE CUT OFF THE OLIVE TREE OF FAITH. OUR SALVATION IS ETERNALLY SECURE! PRAISE THE LORD!